



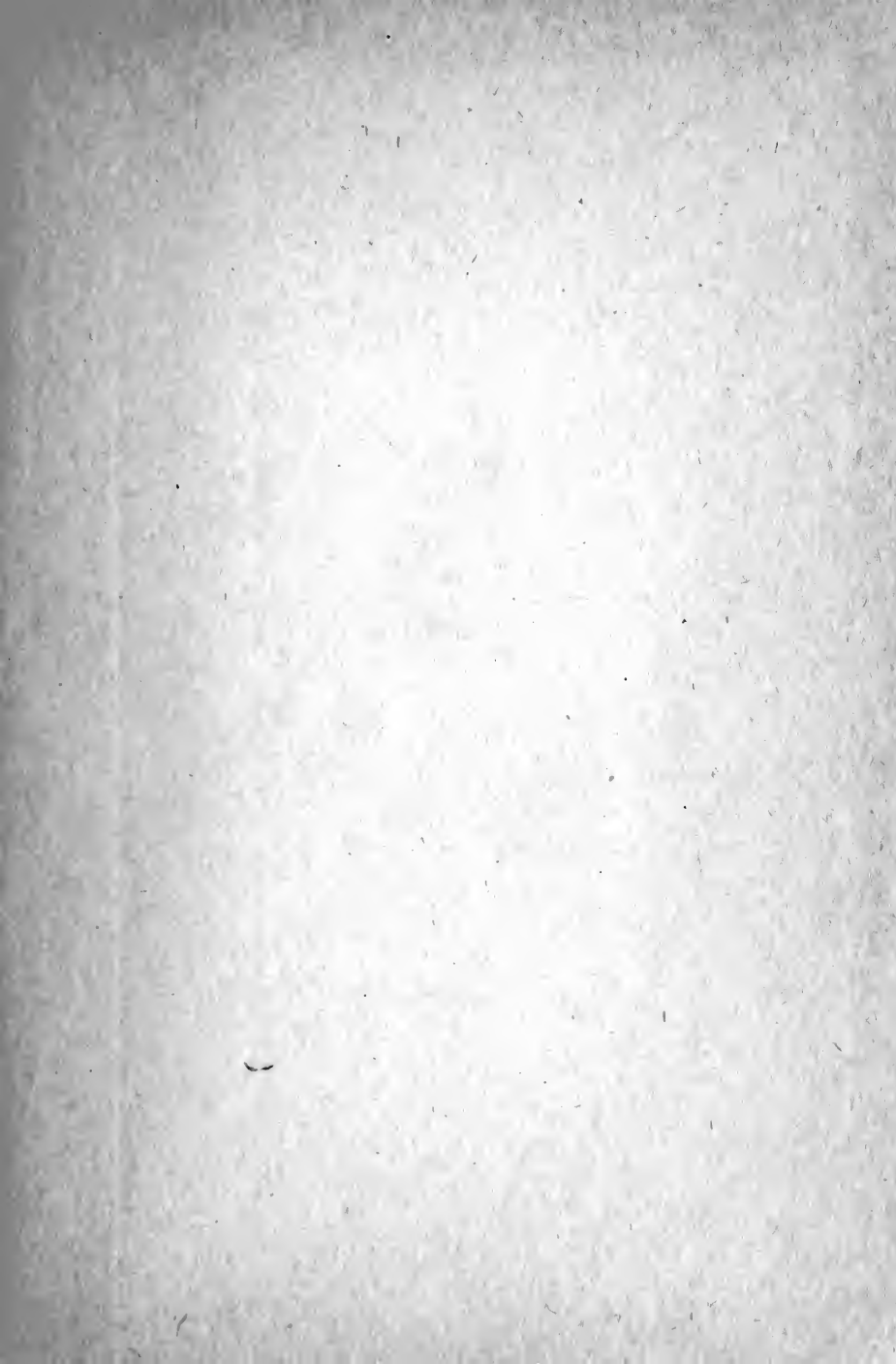


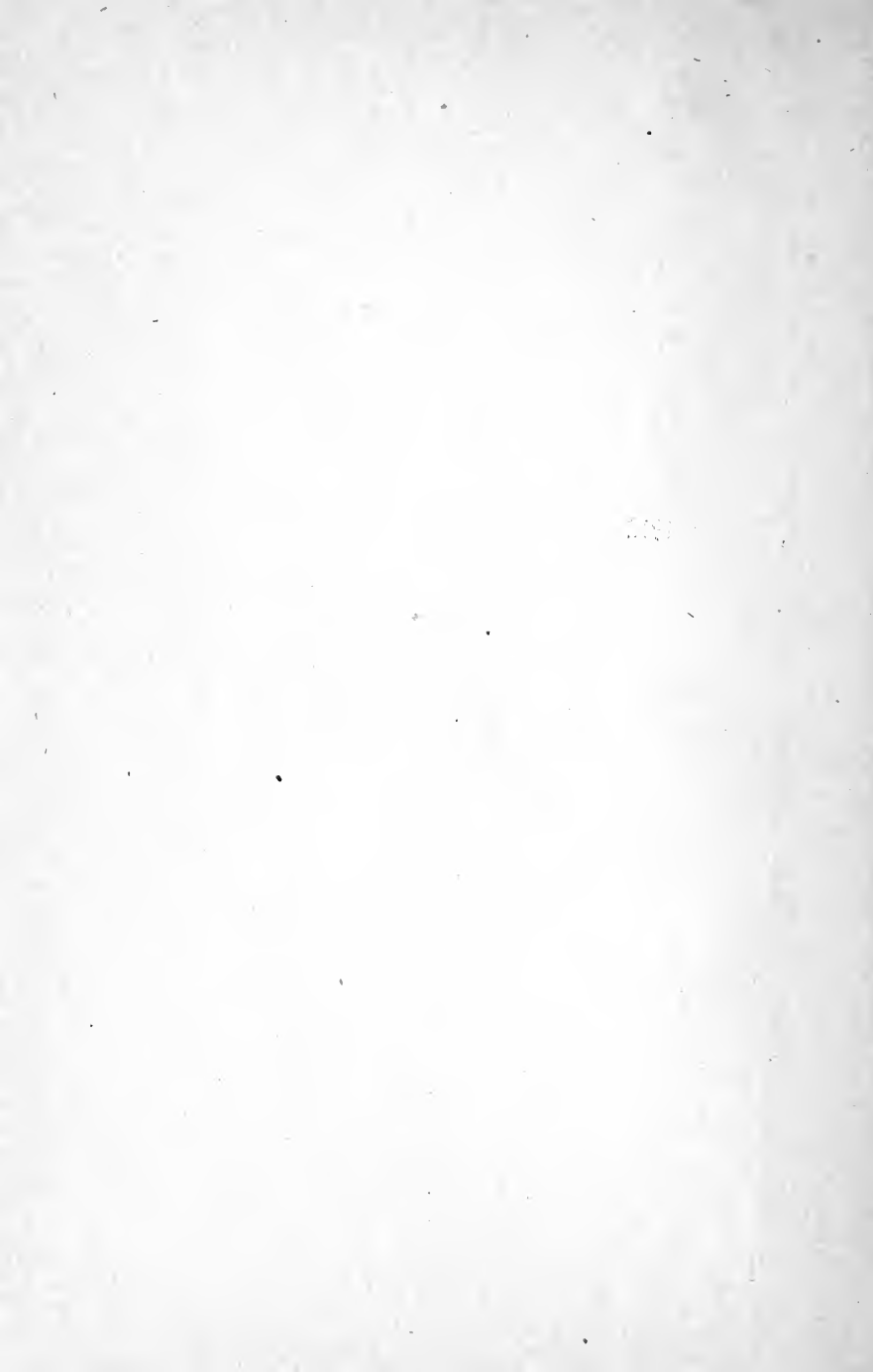
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AN INTRODUCTION TO  
THE STUDY OF  
CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

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AN INTRODUCTION TO  
THE STUDY OF  
CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

BY

ARTHUR R. GRAY

SOMETIME CHAPLAIN OF SEWANEE

WITH

A CONCLUDING CHAPTER BY

W. LLOYD BEVAN

PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND ECONOMICS, SEWANEE



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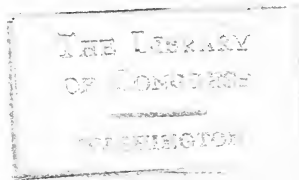
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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE object of this series is to provide for the clergy and laity of the Church as tatement, in convenient form, of its Doctrine, Discipline and Worship—as well as to meet the often expressed desire on the part of Examining Chaplains for textbooks which they could recommend to Candidates for Holy Orders.

To satisfy, on the one hand, the demand of general readers among the clergy and laity, the books have been provided with numerous references to larger works, making them introductory in their nature; and on the other hand, to make them valuable for use in canonical examinations, they have been arranged according to the Canons of the Church which deal with that matter.

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be possible to adapt them to all kinds of students. The actual text itself should be taken as the *minimum* of requirement from the Candidate, and then, by reference on their part to the bibliographies at the end of each chapter, they can increase as they see fit the amount of learning to be demanded in each case. It has been the endeavor of the editor to make these bibliographies so comprehensive that Examining Chaplains will always find suitable parallel readings.

If in any way the general public will be by this series encouraged to study the position of the Church, and if the canonical examinations in the different dioceses can be brought into greater harmony one with another, our object will be accomplished.

ARTHUR R. GRAY.

## INTRODUCTION

THERE is much for which writers upon Apologetics have to apologize, and particularly those who endeavor to be brief. Even in extended treatises many things have to be left unsaid—left unsaid at the risk of being misunderstood. Much more does this apply to those who seek within a few pages to state their position. Upon almost every page something is stated which opens up a debatable territory so large that a separate volume would be needed to defend it. Whoever deals within a small compass with questions which treat of such fundamental conceptions as “time” or “experience” or “reality” must at many points expose himself to severe criticism. Be this as it may, the object of the present essay is such that it involves these risks, and for better or worse they must be faced. It is only hoped that in the bibliographies which are provided at the end of each section the student will find material wherewith he can pursue at greater length the many large problems which by the nature of the case can in this book receive no more than passing suggestion.

Let the object of this treatise be clearly understood, however, and much misunderstanding can be avoided. In the first place it is laid down that spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and that therefore material argumentation is in the last resort in vain. Its only value is to bolster up a belief which has begun in the

region of the spirit. This is a vitally necessary point, and if this essay can do no more than make plain the fact that a proper *atmosphere* is an indispensable element in Apologetics it will largely have made its case. This is the subject to which the first part is devoted. It seeks to clear away the clouds and start the student in the proper spirit.

Then in the second place, and in the second part, an endeavor is made to distinguish between what is and what is not important, and to get down to first principles. The purpose of Part Two is to force the issue back to the fundamental dilemma between Naturalism and Idealism, and from that point to build. If a man's interpretation of life is naturalistic then all further argument upon things religious is in vain. If, however, he is an Idealist, then from that point on it is merely a question of the *preferable interpretation* of Idealism. Most argumentation upon things religious is beside the point, for the simple reason that the disputants argue from different points of view, and by no alchemy of thought could they possibly come to an agreement. It is to an enlargement of this that a considerable portion of Part Two is devoted. As for Part Three, the simple statement therein contained of the argument from history needs no introduction or explanation.

Finally, a few words must be said in explanation of the very evident fact that this book, which purports to be a "text-book," is in reality no more than a series of lectures written in the phraseology of the lecturer. The fact of the matter is that experience has proven

to the writer the practical impossibility of writing a technical text-book upon this subject. It is well enough to do so in other fields of work, but the effective teaching of Apologetics is largely dependent upon the personality of the teacher. If the student is really to benefit from this study it will be only as he is stimulated by his lecturer to independent thought, and it is hard to see how this can be done by recitations out of a formal text-book. The most that can be done is to give the student certain things to read, and then to enlarge upon them in lectures and through discussion—not necessarily upon what the student has read, but upon the ideas that his reading has produced.

It is to try and meet this difficult situation that this book has been cast in the form in which it is presented. Its object is not to solve problems for the student so much as to direct his thoughts so that he may of his own efforts come to a satisfactory conclusion. Along with this has gone the desire to present the subject in such an elementary way that it may be comprehensible to all.

Owing to the migratory existence led by the author it has been impossible for him to get sufficient time in a good library to work up the last chapter and the bibliographies. This work has been kindly done by W. L. Bevan, Professor of History in the University of the South, to whom the author is indebted not only for this work, but for encouragement and advice at all times.

A. R. G.

The Transfiguration, 1911.



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## GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The following books are recommended to beginners for collateral reading :

Turton, W. M.—“Truth of Christianity.”

Harris, C.—“Pro Fide.”

*(These books, although far from exhaustive, have perhaps been the most popular among modern elementary works.)*

Bruce, A. B.—“Apologetics, or Christianity Defensively Stated.”

Sheldon, H. C.—“History of Unbelief in the Nineteenth Century.”

Clarke, W. N.—“The Christian Doctrine of God.”

Harrison, A. J.—“The Church in Relation to Sceptics.”

Illingworth, J. R.—“Reason and Revelation.”

Tyrrell, G.—“The Faith of the Millions.”

Schultz, H.—“Outlines of Christian Apologetics.”



## PART I.

### VITAL APOLOGETICS.

CHAPTER I. The Fact of Faith.

CHAPTER II. The Essence of Faith.

CHAPTER III. The Practical Value of Faith.

CHAPTER IV. The Final Value of Faith.

*“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of  
men, but in the power of God.”*

—I. Cor. ii : 5.

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS

## CHAPTER I.

### THE FACT OF FAITH

"I hungered and thirsted not after those first works of Thine, but after Thee, Thyself, the Truth. . . . Yet they still sat before me in their dishes glittering fantasies. . . . Taking them to be Thee, I fed thereon; not eagerly, for Thou didst not taste in them as Thou wert in Thyself; for Thou wert not those empty fictions, nor was I nourished by them, but rather became more empty."—*St. Augustine's Confessions*.

**I**N matters apologetic when we are fearless and thorough, and when we are not blinded by the glitter of this world's logic, we come in time to realize that the only argument which is germane to the subject, and which possesses immediate and final, rather than mediate and temporary, value, is the argument from the fact of Christian Faith. It alone of all the numerous facts which can be adduced in behalf of the truth of Christianity is unanswerable; and it is to the elucidation and enlargement of this statement that the first division of this book will be devoted.

Whenever one examines into the history of Christian Evidences he discovers that the faith, considered

as a system, has too long been handicapped by the failure of its defenders to realize this fact, that the only argument on its behalf, which is really germane to the subject, is the argument from life. One of the greatest of the benefits which has come from the modern study of psychology is to be found in the way in which it has taught students of religion in their apologetic endeavors to fall back upon the facts of the Christian's experience.

To state the matter concisely, we might say that there are two ways of defending one's belief; the first, by argument and analogy and intellectual processes generally; the second by exhibiting what Christ has done and can do for men; and then by appealing upon the grounds of temporal expediency and eternal efficiency to man's sense of his own needs. The one method is purely philosophical, the other homiletical. The one seeks to persuade the mind, the other the heart and will. Now in the past the former of these methods has almost exclusively occupied the field. Apologetics generally have dealt only with intellectual problems, while the fact of the Christian life, and the conclusions which are to be drawn from that fact have largely been left alone.

In this introduction to the subject of Apologetics it is desired primarily to point out that this practice characteristic of the past has been most unsatisfactory, and that a vast amount of the difficulty which is encountered by the Church to-day can be traced back to the mistaken methods of the defenders of her faith.

In the first place, as a result of presenting Chris-

tianity from the intellectual point of view—as a result of arguing on its behalf with philosophy only—a part of the world has been led into supposing that it is an intellectual system. It is a question of attitude and resultant atmosphere. The attitude which one adopts, more than the words he uses, influences the reader or listener. Accordingly, when one assumes the logician's position in defending Christianity he suggests to his audience, irresistibly, the idea that his creed is a matter of the intellect only. Now, it is to be remembered that the Religion of the Lord Jesus is *other* worldly, and other worldliness is the necessary attitude which the disciple must adopt. St. Paul insists vehemently upon this in his Corinthian letters, and perhaps he struck the keynote of Christian argumentation when he told his flock that he had come to them without any of the gifts of oratory or rhetoric, because he wanted their faith to stand “not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” This idea, so insistently put in the first two chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, expresses exactly what we are trying to state here: that faith must be grounded not upon argument but upon life.

In a book upon such a subject as this it is necessary for two reasons that we begin with this statement of the primary importance of life rather than of logic. In the first place because, as has already been stated, the argument from life is and can only be the vital and appropriate argument; and in the second place, because when one commences a study of this kind it is absolutely necessary that the question be approached from

the proper point of view. It is this second reason which deals with what has been termed the matter of attitude and resultant atmosphere. Unless we begin by recognizing the supremacy of the spirit; unless we begin by realizing that our faith can and should stand not in the wisdom of man but in the power of God—unless we thus begin the study of Apologetics all further efforts will be worse than vain. They will be worse than vain, because we shall move in the wrong kind of an atmosphere—the kind of an atmosphere which is utterly hostile and destructive to real faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot any longer, then, afford to generate an exclusively intellectual atmosphere in our apologetic writings. In the olden days when this was done conditions of enlightenment were such that it was not necessarily disastrous. But in these days men demand that argument be fitted absolutely to the case, and digressions are driven from the court. And it is well that this is so. It is well that we work back to first principles and defend our position in the truly apostolic and vital way—defend it by exhibiting the results of faith in the Christian creed. The kingdoms of this world can never be converted into the Kingdom of Christ by soldier bishops or by learned pedagogues. They both misrepresent the Manger Child. It is only by holy living and holy dying that men and women are to be convinced. It is only as men see our “light shine before them” with brilliance, that they will come to realize that we stand in the true and last-



ing light, and that they will be brought to glorify The Father which is in Heaven.

It is not against a misunderstanding of the Gospel that we speak, but against a misrepresentation; a misrepresentation which brings about a misunderstanding, and which causes many who apply to apologetic writings for help to imagine that Christianity is something quite different from that which it really is.<sup>1</sup>

Christians are born "not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God," and it is in God's language of Life that we must first address those who seek confirmation for their faith. We must do this, lest, using man's language only, a wrong impression be made and many fall into the error of thinking that Christianity is a theory—just as is Socialism.

It is essential therefore in commencing the study of Apologetics that we put first that which is first;

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<sup>1</sup> An illustration in another field of what is meant by a false atmosphere is to be found in the recent Bampton lectures of Peile and Hobhouse. Compare "The Reproach of Christianity," by the former, and "The Church and the World in Idea and History," by the latter. In these books we see how the junction of the forces of the Church and State resulted in a disastrous misrepresentation, and allowed the world to believe that they were of the same essence. We might paraphrase that celebrated remark, which forms the text as it were to Mr. Hobhouse's volume, that the world got into the Church with Constantine, and that the Church has never since been able to get rid of it, by saying that what St. Paul called "the wisdom of this world" got into Apologetics with the early writers and that Apologetics has hardly been able to get rid of it since.

and that before we make use, as we shall, of philosophy and logic, we emphasize the fact of faith.<sup>2</sup>

And now it is well that we see that this primacy of faith over reason is not only spiritually preferable, but intellectually necessary. Religious convictions are not demonstrable, and the existence of the objects which are worshiped by the man of faith are not capable of empirical proof. Let us look into this matter.

We cannot, as the old Hebrew knew so well, "by searching find out God." Could we, then revelation would be gratuitous, and a new conception of God would become necessary; and may we not say, the truth of the Incarnation would have to be restated and perhaps excused? Bold as men may be, and great as is their ingenuity, it is yet impossible to pierce "through Nature to God."<sup>3</sup> We break through what Browning would call the benevolent embarrassments of Nature to an ideal; to an *idea* of God, but that idea is not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It

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<sup>2</sup> An abundant supply of material upon the subject with which we are dealing can be found in such a book as Caldecott's "Philosophy of Religion;" also in A. W. Benn's "History of Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century." In such books we find in its fullness this false interpretation of the apologetic atmosphere with which we are finding fault. Attention should be called also to the books of "Evidences" and "Natural Religion" which were published so freely in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

<sup>3</sup> John Fiske's "Through Nature to God."

is a glittering and resplendent ideal, a creature of the poet's sublimest fancy, a joyous companion for summer skies and placid seas; perhaps even a comforting conception in times of darkness; but it is not the Infinite Father to whom we address our prayers; and it is for toiling and sweating and suffering humanity so fantastic and so far removed as to be almost worthless.<sup>4</sup> Now poetry has without doubt much to do with religion.<sup>5</sup> The rhythm of holiness is an aspect not to be neglected. But when their eyes grow dim with toil or with trouble or with time, men need bulky facts! Facts which cannot, by the nature of the case, be apprehended by any piercings of nature or by any flights of the imagination; facts which can only be obtained through revelation.<sup>6</sup> They that are whole may for the time being need no physician; amusement and di-

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<sup>4</sup>If the New Religion advocated by former President Eliot of Harvard deserves any mention at all, we might say that in what has just been said is summed up the final objection to his theory. We would also include under the same kind of a condemnation such ethereal impracticabilities as Dr. Adler's "Ethical Culture" and Mr. Frederic Harrison's "Religion of Humanity."

<sup>5</sup>Compare a very interesting article on the relation of Religion to Poetry by H. S. Nash in the *American Journal of Theological Study*. See also for a naturalistic examination of the same, Professor Santayana's "Religion and Poetry."

<sup>6</sup>By revelation we mean that which has been progressive and continuous. Compare Canon Alexander's 1910 St. Asaph's Lectures: "On the Promise of the Spirit."

version, æsthetic or intellectual, may be all that they require, and for such the poet's dream and the new religion-maker's god will do—for a time. But to all men, almost without exception, there comes a day when the creations of fine-spun fancy fail to suffice; when they need something to lean upon; something that their hands can handle and that their eyes can see; something which is not only poetical, but practical; and when that day does come, there comes also an awakening to the meaning and need of revelation; a realization of the insufficiency of poetry. It is then to be remembered that the divine idea which the poet puts before us is not the God whom we desire, and that by no process of the intellect can man "find God."

Since, then, by searching we cannot find the Almighty, and since it must therefore follow He can only be sufficiently found through revelation, we lay down, as the basis upon which the apologist has to build, *that* revelation which comes with life: *The Life*, as first revealed in Palestine some nineteen hundred years ago, and, in the second place, the Life as now men endeavor to exhibit it as they follow in the Master's steps. Life can alone prove Life, and Christianity is not a theory, but Life. Like alone demonstrates like! To be in order one must argue for Christianity with Christianity! To compel the exacting world to listen, we must speak to the point before we discourse upon matters of mediate applicability only; and to do this we must begin as we have, and lay as the basis of our Apologetic the revealed part of faith.

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Christianity is Faith, and therefore the one and the only argument for it is to be found in Faith as illustrated. Christianity is Life, and therefore lives alone can testify to its truth.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>For illustrations read such biographies as those of Coleridge Patteson and James Hannington, Forbes Robinson's letters, and the two recent books of Harold Begbie, "Twice Born Men" and "Souls in Action."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ESSENCE OF FAITH.

**I**T will be objected to what has been affirmed in the first chapter that the position adopted is agnostic; that despite all we have said about our wholesome atmosphere the attitude assumed is destructive to reason. We are told that if we lay, as the basis of belief, faith, and thereby exclude logic and philosophy, we join ourselves to the skeptics in an apotheosis of unreason. This is an objection which is to be expected, and we must therefore, in order to meet it the better, take up more thoroughly the problem of the value of inductive and deductive reasoning in things religious. In doing this it conveniently comes to pass that we introduce ourselves to the real point at issue, and to that question which is of greatest importance for an entire understanding of the matter—the essence of faith.

Wherein lies the wisdom of St. Paul in calling his Creed “the foolishness of this world”? This question cannot better be answered than by considering some of the attempts which have been made to base religion upon logical processes.<sup>1</sup> The English phi-

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<sup>1</sup> We shall endeavor later on to develop the fact that in religion will be found a fusion of reason and emotion and will. But it is to be noticed that at this point we are dealing specifically with Christianity; which, if we may say so, is more

losopher, John Locke, for example, argued: I exist. There must be a cause for me; that Cause is God. Again, the great Bishop Butler, whose "Analogy" stood for years as a mighty bulwark of the Faith, said: There is in me a sense of moral obligation; obligation implies law and lawgiver, that Lawgiver is God. Or again, to come down to modern times, John Caird puts it thus: My self-conscious Spirit, and the world over against it, are in irreconcilable opposition so far as thought is concerned, unless I believe there is a Supreme Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Now these types of theistic argument are capable of superb expression; and, as one reads the splendid expositions of Butler, or the appealing passages of Caird, he is well-nigh carried up to Heaven in spite of himself. But the big fact is that he is not, and that no man has ever been so carried into the Heaven of Heavens; he is not transported to the Right Hand of God. Analogy, considerations of the moral law and its categorical imperative, conclusions forced upon us through the concept of causation—these carry men perhaps beyond the little world of the materialists, but they do not transport them into the presence of Him to Whom men address their prayers. They yield to us a Power which we spell with a capital P, or a God to Whom we may, for want

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than religion, inasmuch as it is Life. Life is perfected religion and the Apologist has to recognize the difference between religion and perfected religion.

<sup>2</sup> Compare for an enlargement of this, Caldecott, "Philosophy of Religion," page 7.

of a better term, apply the epithet, "Personal."<sup>8</sup> But the Father of Love is not reached through any such approach. The vital point is touched when we hear an unanimous "No" to the question: Can you pray to the Being thus apprehended? It is all, we discover after consideration, a question of experience, and we have ventured to quote these masters of argumentative theism, because the testimony of mankind demonstrates that with all their ability and with all their precision they have none the less failed to bring the world with their arguments nearer to God. He to Whom men address their prayers is reached, as the universal testimony of believers will acclaim, by means of another way; a way which is super-argumentative—by means of faith.

What then is faith? What is this other way for really finding the Father? Newman came in his answer to this question nearer to the truth than did most of his critics. While others were laboring to elucidate the reasonableness of the Christian Faith, he boldly braved all accusations of agnosticism, and said: It cannot be elucidated! it is a fact! a fact of "assent"! The assent, he contends, is not an act of the reason, but of what he terms "the illative sense." By this so-called illative sense he means: the whole personality, will, emotion, and intellect, all acting in perfectly adjusted and balanced harmony. When a man as a

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Campbell Fraser's definition of Divine Personality in his "Philosophy of Theism," page 251, second edition.



human being with all of his faculties in correct adjustment assents to a proposition, he then performs an act of faith.<sup>4</sup> It is an act which cannot be explained, any more than it can be explained why this man should fall in love with that woman; it cannot be logically defined; it is merely a fact, *the* fact of life; and the world is made up of just such incomprehensible and incontrovertible living facts. A living thing cannot be dissected and remain living; no more can a living faith be defined. There are certain facts which we must not attempt to bring within the circumference of thought.<sup>5</sup> Is this agnosticism? So then is the plan by which we direct all of our doings.

An assent not controlled by reason then is Newman's definition of faith; blind, materially and mundanely speaking it may be, but far-sighted it is, and God-sighted, spiritually speaking, and we contend that this is the commencement of a correct analysis of faith—that it puts half of the truth before us and as such is serviceable. Half of the truth? We cannot rest content with that, so let us go farther and seek

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<sup>4</sup>The reader is referred heartily to a most suggestive book by J. Huntley Skrine, entitled "What is Faith?" In it will be found a delightful presentation of a thesis which is nearly identical with the position assumed here. Mr. Skrine defines faith as "life," and life as "losing life," and thereby develops the philosophy of Christian epistemology. It is a regret that the writer has been unable to see the text of the Bampton Lectures by the same author, which are being delivered as this goes to press.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. J. H. Newman's "Grammar of Assent," *in loco*.

the whole; let us do so lest remaining at this half-way house we be dragged down with Newman and made to bow before an idol of authority. Let us see whether constructive thought cannot come into play and make faith possible to the thorough thinker as well as to such as prefer not to, or cannot, think. Let us see whether a man cannot acquire peace of mind as well as peace of soul in believing.

Peace of mind requires that we find something to which we may turn in order to check up, as it were, the product of the first act of faith. The position in which we have put ourselves should be clearly understood. It has been asserted that our faith in God is, to begin with, inexplicable and independent of discursive reason. It becomes us, therefore, if we would appeal to mature minds, to expose the reasonableness of this act of unreason. Faith we have affirmed to be an attitude which commences to exist outside of the region of logical thought, and we must proceed to inquire whether it, despite such a strange beginning, cannot in the end be justified within that same region. That cannot be unreasonable which ends reasonably, and we should now advance and explain how this blind assent of ours is, when properly carried out, an act of the highest reasonableness.

Newman, in searching for an excuse for his attitude, turned to an infallible authority—or at least he resorted to a theory of authority, and thus relieved himself, through this medium, of further perplexities. Such a method as this without doubt finally dethrones reason. But such an extremity we do not believe to

be necessary, and we hold that a personal assent to an undemonstrable truth is possible which will yet be guiltless of Newman's lapse into skepticism. We need—and this is our answer to those who affirm that our position necessarily ends in an appeal to an external authority—we need no final court of appeal without, since we have such a resort within us, to the which we can turn without loss of dignity or privilege and find a confirmation for our faith. We can of ourselves, as free individuals, “check up” the truth of the things to which we assented blindly in the beginning; and that by means of which we can do this is experience. Experience than which there is no higher reason! Experience which is reason! The most convinced of unbelievers, as well as the most earnest of believers, are ready to join with us in the affirmation.<sup>6</sup>

We lay down, therefore, as that which completes and justifies faith, experience. To experience, as to reason, the patient man turns, and in the light of its decision completes the act of faith. Now it is to be noted that experience as the fulfiller and verifier of faith can be made use of in two ways. One may study, in the first place, the pages of history and come, through a consideration of the events of the past, to a conclusion of undeniable value. Or again, one can study the experience of his own life and with the accumulating years accumulate conviction. With regard to the first form of studying experience, we can say that it is a

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<sup>6</sup> A definition of experience will be found later on in the chapter on “The Sufficiency of Idealism.”

method employed by students of all kinds. A certain economic theory is under investigation, for example. The investigator, before assenting to its value, turns to the history of humanity, looks across its centuries, and in large measure is influenced in his decision, for or against the theory in question, by what he finds upon the pages of humanity's experience. Or again, it may be the scientist who is investigating that which is given to him as fact, and he turns in the first place to the records of his predecessors to see whether with them the fact as given agrees. The whole world thus makes use of experience to verify what is given to it.

And then in the second place with regard to the use of experience in our own lives for the purpose of accumulating conviction: this is not a process in any way peculiar to the student of faith. Our days from sunrise to sunset and our lives from birth to death are occupied with this process. We test each day the theories which are put before us by our teachers; we test each day the very truths told us by our parents; and the opinions we have, if they be opinions which are earnest, are such as have been forced upon us by the sequence of events through which we have passed.

It is in this same way that we check up the value of the truths which are told us upon our mothers' knees, as well as those facts to which we have begun by blindly assenting—the facts of the Christian Faith. We can and we do subject them to a similar process of investigation. Those who pass through the period of maturity, and those who emerge from honest battles with doubt, and those who are able from their

hearts to say their Creed, are such as have made this use of experience. As the years roll by, and as with them, comes the "inevitable yoke," and as men weary of the flatness and fatigue of this confused world, and in agony lift up their eyes to the tranquil hills; as we are driven to search for the truth beyond the truths which we have already possessed; and as we are forced to question the value of everything which we once accepted without question—as we go through this wilderness of wonderment, then those who remain Christians and fearlessly repeat their Creed, are those who have experienced for themselves the truth of it all, and who have come to that conviction and that knowledge of which they stood in need. They have, in a word, completed the act of faith.

This process by means of which men fulfill and check up their *credo* varies with the individual, and in a book upon Apologetics it is vitally necessary that we call attention to these variations. It is only as we allow the variety of provings and fulfillings that we can be Christian philosophers; in fact it is only as we postulate the divers ways in which men complete their convictions that we can take our stand upon the platform of experience. Let us, therefore, indicate some of the various methods.

Some will come to a realization of the truth of their Creed as they journey along the simple path of righteous endeavor; others will find its finality in its capacity to glorify and make worth while the dullness of the daily round, in its ability to act as the miraculous supplier of human needs; others, and for such

this volume and all such books upon Apologetics are primarily written, will find the truth of that to which they have given assent, after they have studied philosophy.

Or to put it in another way: some, after the first unreasoning assent of their youth, in the experiences of life, in its prosaic ups and downs, in its sorrows and joys and appointments and disappointments, find out unconsciously and gradually yet decisively and definitely that the truths taught them about the Lord Jesus are absolutely true for them. They find that their lives are made endurable only in proportion as they yield to the fact of the Incarnation. Such we would say fulfill and verify their faith automatically. Then others to whom such simple verification is denied, to whom the demand comes that they "track suggestion to its inmost cell"; others find the eternal verity of their Creed, and thus complete the act of faith, not until they have in a desperation of doubt examined everything from the philosophical point of view. These study psychology and logic and anthropology and all of the branches of learning, seeking with the questioning Athenians to discover whether these things are so. From this class many—far more than the world is wont to admit—come to the truth triumphantly, and not a few of the staunchest supporters of the Church are they who have checked up their one-time blind faith with the reason and the logic of the world. It is, we say, to the latter class that this volume is primarily addressed. A book upon

Apologetics is in the last resort useful only for the purpose of suggesting to such as are disturbed lines of thought in the pursuance of which they may justify the blind assent with which they have had to begin.

One more remark must be made for the purpose of clearing up what was left unsaid when we were asserting that faith is, in its conception, supernatural, or call it, if you will, blind. It is very probable that some will contend that this is not a fact; that there are many who were never taught Christianity on their mothers' knees, but rather came to it after much time spent in profound thought. St. Augustine and his conversion, for example, or the early Apologist, Justin Martyr, may be cited as men who did not begin blindly. What is to be said to this objection? And the answer is as simple as it is serious: that, despite appearances and despite assertions to the contrary, faith must be, in its beginnings, blind; that much as a man may have studied philosophy, and many as the miles may be over which he has wandered in search of the truth, and honestly as he may think that logic or philosophy has brought him to his conclusion, still, nevertheless, reflection and study have not been the originators of his belief. His first assent like all beginnings of belief came not from the "will of the flesh," but from the unknown listings of the spirit. The fire may have been laid by philosophy, and the wood or the coals, by intellectual endeavor, made ready for the flame, but the spark was kindled by the spirit. We do not merely assert this because it is a fact stated in

the Bible, but because the universal testimony of mankind affirms it to be so.<sup>7</sup>

Once again it is to be asked is not this position which we have assumed an impossible one? Can we in this era of human ingenuity, and in this time when by the might of their minds men are subduing even the air; can we believe in this day of telescopic and microscopic science that men accept blindly the most important thing in life? For if religion is anything at all it is the most important of things. And once again we say, yes! We compromise our worldly wisdom and do it gladly, and this time we defend our position with two counter statements.

In the first place, if we examine the matter, we find that the only way in which we can live at all is by obeying the beckonings of blind faith. In everything that we do, whether it be social or economic or scientific or political, we must if we would advance, venture forth each day into uncharted seas. The existence of every human activity, to say nothing of the freshness and vigor of man's mind, depends upon the making each day of a new experiment, upon the act-

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<sup>7</sup> It must be granted that this brings up an obscure and difficult problem, the most difficult problem with which the student has to deal, inasmuch as it is a personal problem, and because it is so intimate that, like our profoundest prayers, it is inexpressible, and data upon it are unobtainable. We may merely make so bold as to assert categorically that what has been stated is the truth. (Compare: Royce's "Philosophy of Loyalty" and how therein he makes a similar implication.) Cf. pp. 20, 31, and 46.



ings of faith. If men held back and never took the step into the unknown, if they never acted upon the principle that there were grounds for holding this or that undemonstrable theory which lay at the basis of the day's programme, then would they never succeed in anything; then would they, for that matter, never have emerged from brutality and ignorance. The glory and the power of mankind come from its indifference to darkness and its unwavering belief in its prognostications. The credentials of science<sup>8</sup> are identical with those of theology, and the process and the methods of the two are to a large extent the same. Ultimately both depend upon finding something which corresponds to that in the existence of which men have in the beginning put their blind faith. This is the first reason for our willingness to admit that we begin blindly in our search for the truth.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. P. Cooke's "Credentials of Science."

<sup>9</sup> On this readiness of mankind to trust its intuitions—to trust in the "probability" of its hypothesis, as Bishop Butler would have expressed it—we append two very suggestive quotations written by men of utterly different temperaments and points of view. The first by Gladstone, a high Churchman, the second by Prof. Royce, of Harvard, a man as broad in his theology as it is possible to be. "For Doubt," says Mr. Gladstone, "I have a sincere respect, but Doubt and Skepticism are different things. I contend that the skeptic is of all men on earth the most inconsistent and irrational. He uses a plea against religion which he never uses against anything he wants to do or any idea he wants to embrace—viz., the want of demonstrative evidence. Every day and all day long he is acting on evidence not demonstrative: he eats

Then there is a second reason for our not being ashamed of the origin of our assent, and that is, that we are forced thus to act by the conditions of existence. As a matter of fact we do nothing in this world unless we have to. We follow the line of least resistance. While this might be taken to indicate laziness, it can, if properly interpreted, be seen to be an evidence of intensest activity. In matters of religious thought, paradoxical as it may sound, the line of least resistance is in reality the hardest of lines to follow. Necessity has ever been the mother of conviction, and we take gladly only such things as are forced upon us by our æsthetic or our political or our social needs. The truths of Christianity are in this manner forced

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the dish he likes without certainty that it is not poisoned; he rides the horse he likes without certainty that the animal will not break his neck; he sends out of the house a servant he suspects without demonstration of guilt; he marries the woman he likes with no absolute knowledge that she loves him; he embraces the political opinion that he likes, perhaps without any study at all, certainly without demonstrative evidence of its truth. But when he comes to religion he is seized with a great intellectual scrupulosity, and demands as a pre-condition of homage to God what everywhere else he dispenses with, and then ends with thinking himself more rational than other people." (Compare "Religious Correspondence of W. E. Gladstone," vol. II., pp. 77 and 78.) Prof. Royce, on the other hand, expresses it in this way: "The world of doubt has passed before us, a huge mass of inexplicable facts. Here and there we find a connection; we hope that we shall soon find more connection; but still the vast plan, if indeed there be a plan, we search for in vain. But now

upon us—upon those of us who are in experience seeking their verification—by the insistent demands of human personality. Below the mutterings of logic, and below the mouthings of philosophy, and far below the hesitations of worldly wisdom, thunders the diapason of human needs. We do not pause to question the vintage of a wine when it is needed to save a life. All we know and all that we want and need to know is the all-demonstrating fact that it does save life. And so it is with Christianity. We do not hesitate when one points out to us that it involves us in inconsistencies; we do not balk over the logical impossibility of the Timeless One revealing Himself in time; we do not question the Infinite's ability to stoop to finiteness

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strangely enough, all this doubt affects in no wise the willing trustfulness of our devotion to the interests, not only of common life, but also of science. The doubt confuses us only when we talk of religion. That the world as a whole is dark, nobody admits more cheerfully than does the modern scientific man, when he looks to his science for all his religious consolation. For he seeks no consolation save what the phenomena as such furnish. But his philosophical doubt about the ultimate foundation of science is no check to his scientific ambition. He believes in science just as ardently as if he did not in the very first breath of each new philosophical dispute declare that the real world is unknowable." Again, "Why is it that the doubtfulness and the contradictions of the real world seem to everybody to throw a cloud upon religion, even when it is not supernatural religion, but to have no significance whatever for the bases of science?" Or again, "Shall the world be indifferent to one set of our ideals and not to another?" (Compare "The Religious Aspect of Philosophy," pp. 293-4.)

and to limit Himself to the range of the Palestinian hills; we do not hesitate to accept these things when lives are to be made joyous and when souls are to be saved. All that we need and want to know is that faith in the Lord does save and does make joyous. What we cry for is a panacea which will make men *consciously* contented.<sup>10</sup>

It behooves the Christian Apologist, therefore, to make it plain that Christianity does thus satisfy these deepest of human needs; that it is capable of giving men the one thing which above everything else they desire; that it does bring to them that which more than health, or wealth, or power, or popularity creates an infinite peace.

Perhaps at this point it will be objected that our assumption that the world's deepest demand is for peace, is one which cannot be maintained. Such a position is often assumed by those who deny that humanity really needs Christlike joy and contentment. They despise what seems to them the supineness of the calm of the joyful Christian. To those who thus criticize our point of view we can have but little to say. Their outlook upon life is so different from ours. It is perfectly possible, of course, to claim that the kind of contentment which Christianity brings is not the kind that the world actually wants. Other kinds of peace have been offered by other teachers. Many have been the cults and creeds presented to an ever patient

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<sup>10</sup> Compare James's "Varieties of Religious Experience," and Begbie's "Twice Born Men."

world,<sup>11</sup> but between them and our faith the gulf is great. They represent values strange to the Christian, and for want of understanding, and because the question is not one open to argument, he leaves it alone. *As we see life, however, and as we understand humanity*, we believe that the peace which is found in the Cross is the only one which can satisfy. That is all there is to be said. It is a question of one's estimate of humanity.

And thus having outlined what is to be understood by faith, how it is an attitude which begins blindly and then gradually finds its fulfillment and justification in experience, having done this let us turn to a consideration of great importance, the value of faith.

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<sup>11</sup> It is to be recognized that there are certain forms of philosophy which find a justification for life quite different from that on which the Christian relies. There is, in the first place, "a sort of natural Hedonism, not with any reflective consciousness of pleasure as its end, but bent upon activity just for the sake of the exuberance which activity brings. It belongs to the child life of the race, having in it the naïveté of childhood, and it cannot be perpetuated into the years of race maturity." This is the same as the philosophy of the Cyrenaics, teachers who taught that the value of sensations was in proportion to their power to yield pleasure. The measure of human life was therefore sensuous enjoyment. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," such is one justification of living. Now there is no argument against this form of philosophy and the Apologist is willing to let it live or die on its merits.

Another justification of life is that which we might call Æstheticism, "the quest of delicate perfumes, of subtle harmonies of tone and color, luxuries of fine indulgence. It may even take a properly ethical cast, urging a world ideal of

In order to do this we shall take up in the next chapter the problem of how and why faith in Christ brings to men as nothing else can an everlasting peace. We shall ignore the fact that some do not desire the kind of peace which thus results, since Christians cannot take as final their attitude, and we shall proceed on the assumption that the world actually wants the contentment which comes with religious faith, and then endeavor to show that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus best provides this eternally and infinitely desirable end. If we can show this we shall have revealed the value of faith.

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the life beautiful for the sake of its æsthetic appeal." This interpretation of the meaning of life we are again willing to leave to justify itself. We would merely affirm that we are confident that it is a psychological impossibility with such a system of values for men to develop the volitional side of their nature, and, in the long run, to accomplish anything of solid worth. We would point to history for the condemnation of Æstheticism. It must, however, be admitted that this is the most dangerous enemy which the Christian has to face, and that of all the phases of thought now prevalent, none make a more insinuating appeal to the world.

And there is a third justification suggested for life to be found in Nietzsche's philosophy of self-assertion. He would have it that there is enough excuse for living to be found in measuring one's strength against the world. To this again there is no sufficient reply, save to say that we are content to abide by the judgment of humanity as to whether self-assertion is to be compared to self-denial as a factor in race progress. We cannot argue for the infinite value of self-sacrifice.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF FAITH.

**T**HE practical value of faith, or, as we might say, its credential, lies in the fact, as we have stated in the previous chapter, that it can provide as nothing else can the gladness and contentment which men desire. Why is this so? What is there in the Gospel which particularly appeals to men? What has it to offer which is so precious and so incomparably sweet? What is there in men which makes acceptance of the Christian's Creed for them the most desirable of all attitudes?

This question can be answered in various ways, but for our present purposes we cannot do better than to point to the overwhelming fact of forgiveness. By forgiveness we mean more than the passive reception of a remission from debt or sin. We mean readjustment and continuing readjustment; the becoming the subject as well as the object of man's and God's love. Forgiveness! That is the be all and the end all of the Gospel's practical value for men. That is what makes it the infinite panacea, and which gives it not only its uniqueness but its finality. It is forgiveness to the uttermost, "until seventy times seven," which differentiates the Gospel from all other religions, from all other proposed aids to life—for that is what the religions of the world are from the practical point of view.

The Lord Jesus taught no new morality. In many

respects He but repeated the aphorisms of the sages of the East. In most ways He merely emphasized and certified to an old code. But He did one thing, and He illustrated one thing, which completed and made useful all earlier moral codes, when He told His followers to forgive their enemies. We are apt to overlook the importance of this addition to the world's ethical formulæ. We are apt to say that that was all that Christ added to the teachings of Confucius, as if it were a small addition—while as a matter of fact the addition was of inestimable importance and made possible as well as absolutely valuable for the first time the teachings of the sages of the world. Without those words "your enemy," added to the ordinance to love, all moralizing had been in vain. With them they were completed and competent to lead men towards the Throne of God. They form, as it were, the keystone without which all of the moralizings of the world had been to no purpose. Now this forgiveness is the boon which the Gospel brings and the gift which makes it the sole satisfier of the wants of the world. Let us see how this is so, and how the world's want of it is expressed.

We need not occupy space here with the statement that the sinner desires forgiveness and that the world is full of such weary souls.<sup>1</sup> It is too well known that

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<sup>1</sup> The author is inclined to agree with the position adopted in the anonymous volume recently published under the title "Absente Reo," to the effect that consciousness of sin is not always a prerequisite for righteous endeavor and for an earnest Christian life.



those who feel the burden of their transgressions to bear heavily upon them fly for relief to the Cross. What we wish to stress here is a wider fact—a fact not of individuals but of society; of society political and social, economic and ecclesiastical.

After centuries of development and eras of evolution humanity has at last reached the stage of coöperation. Strife and envy still abound, but the world has awakened thoroughly to a realization of their futility. This condition of the modern world is supremely important. The value of the Gospel of forgiveness can be more fully appreciated than ever before, now that the old adage of individualism and cut-throat competition is passing away; now that men have reached the more rational and more humane attitude of desiring unity. Though the world still believes in individual effort and opportunity and rights, and though it still believes in strenuous competition and in friction and in differences of opinion, it believes in them in a different way from that in which it used to, since it calls in unmistakable accents in these days for a competition which shall be fair, and for a difference of opinion which shall be kindly, and for a rivalry which shall be righteous. More than ever before we understand the necessity of there being difference in character and occupation and inclination; more than ever before we believe in individuality; but, and here is the point, the modern man insists that individuality must be such as to allow for quietness and comfort. In other words, the modern problem *par excellence* and the loud cry of the world, is for something which shall

make possible the maintenance of peace and prosperity together with competition and idiosyncrasy. How can this be done? The Gospel affirms, by forgiveness.

But let us illustrate. Socialism is the most significant movement of the day among those who are not primarily interested in the progress of the Christian Faith. Millions of men and women are seeking a solution to the social problem—the problem of inequality and maladjustment. To Karl Marx or to the more modern type of the evolutionist school they are turning for suggestions. The Socialistic parties in Germany and France and England and Spain and Italy are forces of considerable importance; the less well-defined but like-intentioned masses in Russia and the Balkans and Persia and Turkey; and the still less formal but equally interested masses in the far East; all these people are voicing articulately for the first time in the world's history the human need for peace and joy. The foundations of society are at last perceived to be out of joint; poverty, suffering, crime, inequality, brutality, selfishness, despair, greed, squalor—all of these abound, and the world realizes it at last and wants relief. How can it be obtained? The Socialist says by the creation of the Social State governed according to Socialistic laws. But as we read the proposals for the Socialistic State and examine its programme, we realize at once that with it something is radically wrong. What is it?

It is that these theorists perceiving two unalterable facts err in their opinions as to how they are to be faced. These facts are: first, that no two men in all

this world are alike; the second that there are but few occupations open to men. In the first place we have been made, each with our own interpretation of life; and we each have our own estimate of its values. No two men place the same things upon the same level. Each has his own scale, and his own sense of proportion. Then in the second place this situation is made serious by the fact that with all our differences we are shut up, as it were, in a little room, and in this little room, which we call the world, there are but few ways of occupying ourselves—of passing the time. Vary as we may in our predilections and inclinations, we have yet to set about the same kinds of tasks. Thousands have to do the same thing, and yet none are agreed as to how it should be done. Now, given this situation, what is to be expected?

Is not this the psychology of Socialism: that men have at length come to realize this dilemma, and with the best of intentions are seeking to solve it; that they have at last realized that in the first place no two men are made alike, and in the second that millions of them must be occupied in doing the same thing in the same place? That is the *contretemps* which the Socialists are seeking to solve. But the trouble arises and a radical error is made when they endeavor to meet this problem with laws and resolutions—for laws cannot alter these two facts, and nothing which tries to overlook them or to minimize their seriousness will ever help the world.

The Social problem then is: How can men of different ideas and hopes and fears and ambitions set about

a similar task without there resulting a disastrous confusion? We affirm that this problem is alone solved by the Gospel of forgiveness; and that the fact that men are seeking the answer evidences to the fact that they are ignorantly seeking this only possible answer—that they are seeking the Gospel.

When one seeks seriously for a solution to this fearful problem he discovers that forgiveness presents the only possibility of relief. If the world would only learn how to practice it, and accept Him who exemplified it as their Leader, then would their struggles for existence be made endurable, and the social want of the world, as well as its economic want, be satisfied. This is the solution to these problems. For what does forgiveness mean but a readiness to coöperate despite differences, and a gladness forever to readjust, and continually upon the basis of these readjustments to recommence? If my neighbor offends me, or if his endeavors cause us to collide, then the only possibility of peaceful coöperation between us lies in our possessing the ability to forgive. Such a situation as is created by the combination of like occupations with unlike opinions can only be met by men with divine forgiveness in their hearts.

Some people tell us that the trouble with all coöperative theories is that they will not work until human nature be changed. Again others tell us that the Kingdom of God cannot come until human nature be seriously altered. But therein lies a deep fallacy, a fallacy brought about by an inability to understand

the meaning of humanity; for there is no necessity to change human nature. God would not have it done. Men were made to possess peculiarities, and they would not be men were they not different the one from the other, and did they not compete and vie with each other. These things must stand, and we must acquiesce in there being radical differences between this man and that. We have to accept the fact that this one can make money or music, and that that one is financially incompetent or tone deaf; there will always be some who are robust and some who are sickly; some rich and some poor; some popular and some hated. For these conditions we must prepare ourselves and not blunder into idle talk about the changing of human nature. For such a reversal of God's method there is no need. Men are made to vie and dispute with each other in order that out of their disputes and differences they may emerge perfectly charitable and kindly.

And herein we see from our practical point of view the significance of the gospel message and the meaning of the Life of Christ. For from it we can see how that if we but follow in His steps, and forgive in every thought and act—forgive even those who differ most from us and with whom we come into most violent collision—that then the possibility of solving the world's problem is made clear. So our contention would be that there is in the extent of the Socialistic movement abundant evidence that the world wants Christianity, and that the economic and political movements of the day testify to this fact. If the upheavals

in Europe mean anything, and if the growing unrest the world over is significant, it means and signifies that the people are dissatisfied, and that they are demanding a solution to the present impossible conditions; and further the *form* of their demand, and the form of the theories which they are enunciating, reveals that unwittingly they are clamoring for the solution which Christianity provides. The demand for liberty along with fulfilled individuality; the demand that all men be allowed to have a chance, along with the demand for the preservation of idiosyncratic human nature, is equivalent to the demand for the Gospel.

But it is not only in Socialistic movements that we find symptoms of this kind—wherever we turn we find an unrest and a disturbance which point towards a need of the Gospel. In the world of economic science, or in that of ecclesiastical organization, everywhere men are demanding those things which can alone be obtained through an acceptance of the principles of Christ. Above all in the religious world we are hearing each day of new attempts to foster the process of unification. Church Unity Leagues, World's Missionary Congresses, what are they but signs of the Christians' desire for unity? But how can such a combination be obtained so long as men of all parties are declaring that they cannot give up their essentials? We answer that coöperation can at least be reached only through the practice of forgiveness; that men will ever hold to their divine right to differ in their philosophy of clothes and of forms, and that they will continue to have different predilections, and that with

those ever-present sources of argument and friction no progress can be made until the real essence of the Gospel is appropriated.

To turn in another direction and investigate the modern religious problem but brings us face to face with a similar result. More emphatically in the religious world than in any other is the demand heard for faith in the Divine Master. It is not only a question of explicit appeals, but implicitly and unwittingly men are calling for the Saviour on all sides. As has been brought out by Fr. Figgis in his "Gospel and Human Needs," the times are preëminently religious, and men are no longer asking whether they shall be religious or not, but rather to *which* religion shall they subscribe. So loud is the call for religion, and so inadequately has the Church been responding to it, that new forms of faith are springing up on all sides of us, and their promulgators find an astonishing demand for them as they hawk them through the streets. Curiously enough these modern Creeds seem most to prosper in quarters of the world which men had come to believe to be essentially irreligious. At all events their spread shows how feverishly the people are demanding spiritual sustenance.

But are these demands implicit demands for the Gospel? That is the question which is of moment to us, and we can answer in the affirmative, since the form of the new religions is such as to suggest that what is ultimately desired is not this or that temporarily acceptable makeshift, but the eternally satisfying Gospel. As we watch the processes

and products of these ethical culture societies, or healing associations, or bands for æsthetic endeavor, we find again and again details which reveal their dependence upon the Christian idea. One will provide a hagiology, another will stress authority, another will lay emphasis upon toleration, and so one might proceed and enumerate the many ways in which new religions all reveal their endeavor to approximate to the Christian ideal. Thus in many directions we see the workings of the *anima naturaliter Christiana*. Though Christians be misunderstood, they can confidently and quietly watch these strange performances, since they perceive two things. In the first place that they are to be explained by the fact that Christianity having "put ideas" into the minds of men has failed to live up to her profession; and secondly they reflect the need for Christ Himself, and must invariably lead back to Him.

As yet we have been dealing with faith in the Gospel as a supplier of human needs from the worldly or utilitarian point of view only. Were we to stop there, were we to present faith as a thing of material benefit only, then we should utterly betray the Cause. The danger of regarding Christianity as something which will supply our material wants has been most clearly expressed in a modern novel<sup>2</sup> wherein is portrayed the despair to which men are ultimately brought if they fail to grasp the fact that the real worth of Christianity is other-worldly. Our affections cannot be set on

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<sup>2</sup> Selma Lagerlöf's "The Miracles of Anti-Christ."



things below. We cannot allow ourselves to estimate the value of a thing by its capacity to provide us with material comfort. That is the basic error of Socialism. The Socialist works upon the theory that a man's life consists in the abundance of *things* that he has, and Socialism is an endeavor to make a proper distribution of *things* throughout the world. We must not fall into any such error here, and while we have for the purpose of presenting fully our subject developed the utilitarian value of faith in Christ, it is more incumbent upon us to state and dilate upon its Heavenly and eternal value.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FINAL VALUE OF FAITH.

WE must now revert to the line of thought with which we began, since the moment we speak of final values and final things, we have left behind us the region of practical experience and demonstration and have entered into the realm of the absolute. As long as men remain within the territory of empiricism, just so long can they make use of the world's wisdom and its methods of argument. But these weapons must be abandoned the moment the idea of finality comes into view, since finality is but another term for infinity, and infinity is, as such, beyond experience. We find ourselves, therefore, once again compelled to speak in the language of the spirit, and this is so because in religion and in discussions about religion, as it is with life and discussion thereof, the beginnings and the ends are wrapt in mystery. The whence and the whither of life are not subjects for scientific examination. As we began by postulating blind faith we must end by postulating a value which we cannot see. The Christian life begins we know not how, and its end, its final value, is but a leap into the lands beyond the eyes of man—

“When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
“Turns again home.”

Where the boundless deep is, how we first emerged from it, why we endeavor to win back to it again

we cannot prove. We deal with these problems of whence and whither, and we speculate about them, in philosophical Apologetics under the so-called cosmological and teleological forms of thought. Philosophical Apologetics is primarily concerned with this matter and with it we shall deal in the next division of this book. For the present we are to consider the end or value of faith from an homiletical rather than from a philosophical point of view, since we are to treat the problem as a final problem, and such admit only of homiletical treatment.

When we ask what is the final value of faith, it is evident that we are by implication asking: What is its subject, and towards what is it directed? So long as we were content to discuss its utilitarian values we were asking merely how it advanced man, how he as a mortal being is benefited by it. Such a question deals with relative and demonstrable truths, with a visible process rather than with an invisible product, since we can show and the world will acquiesce in our statements that man is aided by religious faith.<sup>1</sup> But when we ask for the absolute value of the life of Faith it is an end that we are seeking, *the* end. Having thus cleared the way we can now proceed with the problem.

It will be evident to all who consider the question closely that any speculation upon the ultimate worth of faith compels us to discuss that in which the faith

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<sup>1</sup> See a most suggestive article on the "Belief in God and Immortality as Factors in Race Progress," in the *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1910.

is placed. As we have already stated, the value of belief in anything is contingent upon the value of that in which the belief is placed. This is a point often overlooked in philosophical discussions, and entirely overlooked by many promulgators of systems. While it would not be well at this point to elaborate the claims of the Christian's faith over other proposed objects which are set up to be worshipped, we must endeavor to point out wherein we believe that as an object in which to believe the Christian Trinity possesses infinite and final value. In a word, the justification and the ultimate argument for Christianity are to be found in the fact of the Triune Personality of God. Let us look into this matter and with reverence investigate its significance. Let us see wherein faith is made worth while, where it becomes of absolute worth, if placed in the Triune God.

In the first place, it is necessary for us to agree that a man must have faith in something. Planning and purposing, in fact all human endeavor, would be utterly impossible did not one have a creed of some sort. There are creeds many because of the varieties of human nature and the many kinds of purposes. Some creeds are relatively commendable, while others are not to be commended at all. This man labors night and day because he believes in Power, and that it will slake his thirst—his strange and incomprehensible thirst. Others direct their lives upon the theory, consciously or unconsciously, that the hunger which gnaws at their vitals and which cannot be satisfied by bread alone, can be satisfied by pleasure of one variety

or another. Now these are but illustrations of forms of faith in accordance with which men turn to the right hand or to the left. The most complete agnostic possesses a creed, which is nothing but the creed of uncertainty; since having taken as his basis the undemonstrableness of certain things, in accordance with that theory he directs his goings, and *faith is the directing of one's life by a theory*. And then there is the faith of the Mohammedan, or of the Hindu, or of the Buddhist, and they are one and all but manifestations of the fact that man must have a final object before him in relation to which, as a final object, he can think and act. Now it is incumbent upon us to show two things. First, that this attitude of man is a result of and depends upon the fact of freedom; and, second, that freedom being granted, the object of our faith will be characterized by our estimate of personality.

Take first, then, what we are so bold as to call the fact of freedom. If there be no such thing as freedom of the will, if we are no more than "permanent possibilities of sensation,"<sup>2</sup> if it be no more than a kind of automatic telephone central that directs the interchanges between the afferent and efferent nerve activities; if in a word there is no such thing as that which we call human personality; then this universal human attitude which we call "having faith" is all a blunder, and confidence in any kind of a God, or working towards any kind of an end, is but wasted time. But if we be more than a mobile sensational process, if we be

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. John Stuart Mill.

permanent possibilities of perfection, if we can make and mould our lives, and if we be potentially immeasurable and divine, then is faith natural and necessary.

But what right have we, after all, to dream that we are different from leaves blown before the autumn winds? We cannot prove that our wills are free, nor can we make claim from experience that we are in the true sense of the words originators and creators. In this dilemma, which is as old as the race, we do not find ourselves dismayed, since from the depth of our being we assert that we do not need to demonstrate this fact of facts, that it has proven itself through the ages. We insist that any endeavor to interpret experience, such as is seen in the efforts of most modern philosophers, is in itself equivalent to an acceptance of freedom. That I agree or disagree with my neighbor, or that you disagree with me in my present statement upon the significance of the labors of thought, is in itself nothing less than a statement that we reject mechanism and accept personality.

We would, however, be most ready at this point to admit that demonstration is not to be considered, perhaps not desired, and boldly we take as our battle cry the freedom of the will. But it is to be recognized that it is a matter of mystery, inasmuch as it is a final thing, one which in its very essence cannot be encompassed by thought. This is the first postulate we have to make; the second is that given personality and the necessity of faith, the solution of the problem is to be found in faith in the Christian's God.

It is all a question of how we are to approach the problem of life so as to account for the significance of human personality. From the point of view from which we are now looking, the eternal query is: What is life and why are we here, and what is the purpose of the powers with which we are endowed? To this question we would assert that there is no answer which can be given short of the Christian's answer. God is as necessary to men, if they be free, as the sunlight is to the flowers. The perfect person is for the imperfect indispensable. This is the ultimate human need. Why it is so is not the question; we cannot explain this necessity unless we explain personality.<sup>3</sup> All that we know is that as marvelous combinations of emotions and volitions and reasonings we find it otherwise impossible to believe—we, that is, who are followers of the Christ—that we are the climax of creation; we cannot accept any explanation of the universe which would leave us looking into empty skies; which would leave us free creators in a world which had no governor who was equally or more free. For what would freedom be to us, and what would personality be if behind the veil, behind the winds and the waves and the laughters and the sorrows of life there were nothing but an emotionless, motiveless and reasonless machine? Would we not at once be thrust into those depths of despair wherein the Greeks toiled?

These questioners throw us by suggestion into the

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<sup>3</sup> The problem of personality will be dealt with in the chapter upon that subject in the next division.

arena of dispute as to the superiority of the Christian interpretation over that given by other religions. Without going deeply into the subject, we would merely point out that in proportion to our appreciation of the meaning of personality, and in proportion to the degree to which we develop the idea, and in proportion to the amount to which we endeavor to make use of our powers, is the response which we make to the question as to the nature of God. It would seem to be a psychological impossibility—again we speak as Christians—for beings that believed in their freedom to rest content with a conception of God which fell short of the Christian Trinity. Not only would it seem impossible, but the history of other faiths would seem to testify to this. The despair of the Greeks, the indifference of the Oriental, the aimlessness of the Brahman and the Buddhist, the fatalism of the Mohammedan; are not all these concordant witnesses to the effect produced upon the spirit of man by an insufficient idea of the divinity? Can we not attribute the inertness of the children of the far East, whether they be Confucians or Zoroastrians, to the fact that their idea of the being which they conceive to be above them is insufficient for human needs? If man is to plan and purpose, and if in his plans and purposings he is to develop to its highest capacity his freedom, then according to the testimony of racial experience—according to the superior development which we witness in Christian lands—according to the standard set by Christian personality, we affirm that he must think of the Being that is above him and upon whom he de-



pendes in the terms of the Christian Creed. Just as it would be impossible for us to believe ourselves to be free in the midst of a mechanical universe, so it would be insufficient for us in the presence of the facts of anthropology and ethnology to conceive of the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe in terms less comprehensive than what we call for convenience the Trinity.

Then the further question arises: What do we mean by human persons? What do we find in human personality that makes demands so stupendous? We find (repeating what has already been said), that whatever personality signifies, certainly its significance seems best to have been appreciated and appropriated by those who believe in the Lord Jesus. Just as men of all kinds and characters agree in their approbation of the character of Christ, and just as high and low, rich and poor, benefactors and malefactors are as one in their approval of saintly character, just so we hold does humanity testify to its convictions that the real Christian has most perfectly applied and developed the freedom with which he is endowed. Then, in regard to the essence of human personality, and what there is in it which would point specifically towards the Trinity as its proper response, we can say now, in anticipation of what will have to be said when we deal with the problem in another place, that man's peculiar combination of freedom, emotions, and intellect would seem to point to what the doctrine of the Trinity teaches.

There is, indeed, a certain type of critic as to whose

objections a word must be said in passing. Such objectors are those who curiously assert that this whole problem of the opposition between personality and mechanism is for them meaningless. Meaningless, inasmuch as they perceive no irreconcilable conflict; meaningless, because they see no reason why they should not be contented with a reign of law, even though it signify the obliteration of their freedom. They proclaim that it is all a question of common sense; that it is all a matter of accepting gladly the conditions which the Universal Power imposes. This position when analyzed, in brief, amounts to this: that A claims that freedom of the will is for him superfluous, and that he is above the discouragements which others find in the statement that men are as limited in their words and deeds as are flowers in their growth and fragrance; that in both cases all is subject to the driving of an unknown, unappreciated force.

Now what is to be replied to this very common affirmation? Frankly, nothing is to be said; at least, so long as one remains within the regions of discursive thought, no adequate reply can be made to this statement. However, a very decided response is made by the convinced Christian, who, dismissing the impossibility of combating this position from the logical point of view, assumes the attitude of the spiritual warrior and declares that what is at stake is no less than the meaning and value of personality. It is only from this point of view that anything can be answered to those who declare their readiness to renounce their God-given freedom and become crea-

tures of a blind, irresistible force. Against this contention the Christian asserts that he who is willing to renounce his freedom is either ignorant of his capacities, or else has never through usage learned their irresistible worth.

He who has hearkened to the voice of conscience within him, and who has experienced the glory of righteous endeavor, knows what freedom means and appreciates its splendor—knows and appreciates these things too much to surrender his belief in such transcendent possessions.

From such a point of view it is that we state that peace and contentment belong only to those who have "put on" Christ. From this position we say that the peace of God comes only to those who believe in Him as the end of all their purposes and deeds. Such a peace we mean as came to Augustine or Luther or Loyola; such as comes in these days to thousands of men and women; such a peace as alone makes life worth while—this it is which certifies to the final value of what we mean by a human personality.

But, it is asked once more, are such beings as Luther and Loyola normal human beings, or are they merely specimens for the psychological laboratory? That is a question which depends upon one's point of view rather than upon one's logic. The Christian is not afraid to take his stand upon the ground that his Master represents normality, and in lesser degree he is not afraid to hold up as the best specimens of humanity those who have endeavored to follow in His steps. Such are not intellectuals; they are

not æsthetes; nor are they Aurelian moralists. Many flaws in their characters can without doubt be found, and they are far from perfect; but they are wholesome, and represent the type to which all may conform. They are intelligent without being too prone to depend upon reasoning power; they are emotional but they do not require too much sense stimulus; they are wilful without being headstrong; they keep these three elements of their personality in such proportion that as all round men they can develop. They find in the Christian God the prototype of which they are but faint and feeble suggestions. In Him they find the assurance that they have not been given their gifts to no purpose, and that there is a reason and a comfortable justification for their existence. God, being a God in Whom love and will and reason are separate and yet inseparable, three in one and one in three, provides for these normal human beings the solution to the problem of their personality. With His existence made sure, all of the mysteries and the unquenchable questionings of life are at least by suggestion cleared up. The joys and griefs and the aspirations and the hopes and the intimations and the ideas which crowd these little lives of ours become tolerable and helpful only upon this hypothesis.

That, therefore, is what men must have; that is their final need: a Being, belief in Whom will assure them that their experiences are not all in vain and that their failures and successes are not all empty and meaningless. That is what they must have if life is to be worth while, and that is what they do receive when they

place their faith in the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the statement which in the last resort we render as Christians as the absolute argument for faith. In the words of St. Paul it is thoroughly expressed. He speaks of the "adoption" which we have received; the adoption which through the revelation of the Spirit has been made certain to us; the adoption of which the Psalmist was dreaming when he cried, "My heart hath talked of Thee," and he says: "But we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!" And this same Spirit helps us when we are in need and when we are hard set to justify our belief. For it "bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God"; aye, and more than this is revealed to us, "for if we are children, then are we heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." That is the assurance which we have, and that is the final argument for faith—the fact that we know that our personality means more than likeness and more than kinship, since we are heirs.

#### SUMMARY.

Thus we conclude this introduction to Apologetics. It has been written, as has been frequently stated, in order to prepare the proper atmosphere; in order that the student of this subject might begin in the proper mood, and with a proper estimate of the value of its various aspects.

For, however we may reason, and however we may plan, in the beginning our belief comes from the un-

known; and we are awakened to the consciousness of God not by any of this world's alarms or arguments.

To many this would suggest the doctrine of conversion so feverishly preached in the last century, and still over-emphasized in many places to-day. If this be the doctrine of conversion, then by it we must abide. One thing, however, should be said, and that is that we cannot hold to a conversion that is necessarily sudden. Men may be blinded by the light as they travel along roads to Damascus, and in many instances, specially in such as are described in Harold Begbie's "Twice Born Men," a new life is begun in the twinkling of an eye; but we should be most strenuous in rejecting any theory which declared that *all* conversions are *consciously* sudden. Without doubt the change as occurring in time must be a momentary affair, and thus far it is sudden. But we affirm that in the long run the best illustrations and the vast majority are those which have seemed to come gradually—that is, those in which by a long and painful process men have by degrees appropriated and made actual what in the beginning was unrealized and unappropriated. This accords with our position in regard to the nature of faith. Its beginning is blind and perhaps unrealized—its completion and verification is the product of experience.

So let us now commence the study of Apologetics proper with a full understanding of its place and propriety. Let us take up logic and philosophy and history as we take up life—in order that in them we may find that which will enlarge the boundaries of our

vision, and deepen the certainty of our convictions, and assist us to reach that goal towards which we have without their aid begun to journey.

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## PART II.

### PHILOSOPHICAL APOLOGETICS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I. The Fundamental Problem: The Antitheses: Naturalism and Idealism.

CHAPTER II. The Insufficiency of Naturalism.

CHAPTER III. Phases of Naturalism.

CHAPTER IV. The Sufficiency of Idealism.

CHAPTER V. The Interpretation of Idealism.

*"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then  
face to face."*

— I Cor. xiii : 12.

## PHILOSOPHICAL APOLOGETICS.

### INTRODUCTION.

WE must now undertake to justify in the world of thought the assertions which have been made in the first part. While for the convinced Christian the foregoing statements are and must be satisfactory, he should nevertheless desire to bring his faith into line with the world's reason and to present it as a reasonable thing. In order to avoid the necessity of explanation or recapitulation later on, it will be best for us to characterize our method of thought at once. Those who are familiar with philosophical movements will have recognized in all that has been said a readiness to follow the method of Pragmatism, and as we have begun in the region of the spirit with Pragmatism, so shall we continue in the region of philosophy to be pragmatical. Now Pragmatism denotes that very ancient kind of reasoning which subjects everything to experience, and to experiencing for proof. Taken in its unqualified sense, Pragmatism means that truth and utility are identical; and that the life of a man is a ceaseless effort after the attainments of certain practical results; and that what we call "truths" are simply the *values* which emerge in this pursuit. An axiom is a postulate—a proposition, which we find to demand acceptance if we would be successful in our efforts. For example, "a straight line is the shortest distance between two

points." This is an axiom which we find in experience to be convenient for us to accept, and so we accept it, not because it contains any absolute truth—there is no absolute truth the follower of Professor James would aver—but because it is practical to do so. The old English proverb which says, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating," is a crude but effectual way of stating the principle of Pragmatism. That which is good and valuable and worth while and real, is merely that which in the passing of the ages produces all that is expected or required of it.

Now it is the Christian Apologist's claim that there are degrees of Pragmatism, and that there is what we may call Christian Pragmatism, and in these days it is well for us to admit our dependence upon and indebtedness to this form of thought. It is hard to see how in the twentieth century we can escape the demand for authentication through experience. We demand it in every phase of life, and as we have shown in the first section we demand it with infinite persistence in religion. We walk about in worlds not understood with but one fixed idea in our minds, which is that our needs must be satisfied. The positing of Christianity as that which satisfies human needs, and as that which supplies the necessary complement to the powers of personality, is in itself pre-eminently a pragmatic position!<sup>1</sup> If we differentiate between Christian Pragmatism and the Pragmatism

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<sup>1</sup>On this subject the reader is referred at length to the writings of Ritschl.

of the schools we need not fear to place ourselves under the auspices of this form of philosophy.

But let us indicate at the outset what we consider to be the difference between these two kinds of thought. The one, technical Pragmatism, commences with nothing and conceives the pursuit of truth as a ceaseless searching for practical results. To begin with, it asserts, we have nothing given; no God, no infinite value, no final fact, no absolute truth or beauty or goodness. We begin in a world with nothing, and that with which we end is all we can ever have. If we end, as a result of our life experience, with certain ideas of truth and beauty and goodness, then those ideas have no value apart from the use which they have been to us in our pursuance of the daily round. They *were* not in the beginning. They merely emerged as utilities for the furtherance of human life. In a word, nothing is absolute, and everything is relative, and worth only its practical efficiency. This is what is called Pragmatism proper.

On the other hand, Christian Pragmatism would begin with God and absolute truth as infinite values, and then having wiped the slate clean, as it were, proceed through a diagnosis of life and of experience to work its way back to these ultimates. This will be our method. We shall in large measure rely upon the compulsion of human needs, but it must be distinctly understood that we repudiate the position that we have to start from nothing, and that we have no Absolute with which to begin. Protagoras, the contemporary of Plato, first enunciated the theory that "man was the

measure of all things," and though many would in a mood of skeptical opportunism accept this as truth, we, on our part, hold (quite independent of the Christian revelation which would in itself compel us to hold it) that there is something permanent in this world of change; that flux is not of the essence of all things; but that on the contrary it would be impossible for us to reason at all did we not have something permanent with which to begin, some rock on which to stand. As Dr. Inge has said, "Human needs may, as the pragmatist tells us, be the dynamic of all speculation; but one of the greatest of human needs is to be something more than a pragmatist."<sup>2</sup>

This greatest of human needs to which Dr. Inge appeals is the knowledge and the conviction that independent of these experiences of ours, and beyond the world of change and decay there abides an Eternal. This is *the* human need. More insistent it is than the need for daily bread, since it is a prerequisite to the life of thought. Unless we have the assurance that an Eternal exists independent of our little provings we could not so much as begin to plan and purpose. The present is not an opportune moment to discuss this point and therefore we must content ourselves with asserting that the greatest of human needs is the presupposition that certain absolute values exist. Christian Pragmatism would commence then with positing, as a fundamental, that the existence of God—

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<sup>2</sup> W. R. Inge: Lecture on the Philosophy of Eucken, reported in the *Guardian* for October 7, 1910.

or whatever term we may choose to employ—and the Eternity of an Absolute Power are absolute facts; it would do so asserting that these facts are testified to by universal experience, and by the law of utility, and by the measure of man's necessity.

What the nature of that Power is, and how we are to characterize it, it is the business of Philosophical Apologetics to develop.

Browning's definition of knowledge would seem to cover this position.

"To know

"Rather consists in opening out a way

"Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,

"Than in effecting entry for a light

"Supposed to be without. Watch narrowly

"The demonstration of a truth, its birth,

"And you trace back the effluence to its spring

"And source within us."

Such a position as this is good psychology, since as we showed in the first place we must begin with blind faith in an end; and blind faith in an end postulates a beginning independent of experience. Philosophical Apologetics is simply the endeavor to find in thought experience, in life-long reasoning, the real worth and value of the presupposition with which we are bound to begin. If there were no beginning before us, then it would be an impossibility for us to imagine the possibility of an end. And so, having begun with the assumption that God exists, let us for the present erase it from our minds, and subject our faith to reasoning, and seek for the justification and authentication of the belief with which we recklessly begin.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM.

#### THE ANTITHESES: NATURALISM AND IDEALISM.

TO avoid the necessity of having to refer back for elucidation, it is well to begin at the beginning and build from the bottom up by stating just what philosophy is. It is the attempt of man to explain what he believes to be the significance of life. It is his endeavor to put into words the meaning of that "cosmic adventure" which we call a human life. Philosophical *systems* are the explanations which different individuals have from time to time given of this problem of existence. Philosophy is not, however, confined to heavy, unreadable volumes, as some of the best and most availing that has ever been written is unsystematic and in the form of poetry or essays, or even novels. The enigma of human life is so all-overshadowing, that every serious word which men utter is in a sense philosophical.

But what is this problem and this enigma over which so many great minds have labored so carefully, and into which men delve whenever they think or speak in earnest? It is the problem presented to them by the contrast which the world presents; the contrast between life and death, between ambitions and realizations, between causes and effects, between joys and sorrows, between thunder and sunshine, between per-



manence and transitoriness. As we press onward from day to day our path is ever and again crossed by shadows which disturb us and at times so darken the way as to make us pause and endeavor to take a reckoning.

Now this taking of a reckoning is the philosophical activity. As it has been put,<sup>1</sup> all our prepossessions and inclinations are being continually set at naught by a "sunset touch," or by "some one's death," or by a "chorus-ending from Euripides," or by "a fancy from a flower-bell." These and such like, small though may be their superficial import, make us pause and ask: What does this mean? Why was that man taken and another left? What is there in the splendor of that sunset which disturbs me? What fancy is it that persuades me that something imperishable lies within the beauty of the flower-bell? From whence is it that there comes echoing back to me visions and unsounded depths of sadness from those lines in Euripides? What is the meaning of those intimations which we receive from the changes and changefulness of life? We find that everything which should be in our eyes important is in reality unimportant, and we find that that which, according to the world's system of evaluation is precious, is in reality worthless; that no gold or silver or laughter or luxury avails after a sun is set, or once the dreaded change has come. Why is this?

Such as these were the questions which set men to

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<sup>1</sup> Browning's "Bishop Blougram's Apology."

theorizing and which gave the impulse to the Greeks who long ago inaugurated Western philosophy<sup>2</sup> and these are the problems which still incite men to constructive thinking, and out of which emerges what we call philosophy. Now it behooves us, if we would understand what confronts the Apologist, to see how these questionings have from time to time been answered, since by doing this we can best get to the heart of the matter in which we are interested.

Broadly speaking, these questions have evoked one of two kinds of a reply. We can reduce all systems of thought, however varied and however diverse their superstructures, to one of two general divisions. Theories of the universe, and explanations of the meaning of change and transitoriness, must be either idealistic or naturalistic. These are the antitheses of thought, the Ebal and Gerizim of the philosophical world. Proverbially, but improperly, these opposite tendencies are called Aristotelian and Platonic, and men say that one must be a follower of one or the other of these masters of thought. What is meant is merely that one must be either analytical or synthetic, naturalistic or idealistic. It would be a wearisome tale to tell of the development of these lines of thought, but it is necessary, in order to get a basis from which to begin, that we understand what they signify.

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<sup>2</sup>For the influence of Grecian philosophy upon Western thought, see Caird's "Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers," Allen's "Continuity of Christian Thought," Hatch, Bampton Lectures.

The problem then before us is to see, how as men have labored with the problems which confronted them, and how as they have endeavored to explain what 'humanity' means, and what its place is; to see how, as they have reduced the conclusions to which they come to formulæ, they have arrived at one of two conclusions, which are: either that behind the changing phenomena of life there is a reality, or else that there is not.

What we need as a basis, in order to appreciate the problems which confront the Apologist, is to know that thinkers declare, either that below and about us are Everlasting Arms, or that there is nothing to support us except the muscles which we ourselves can develop. These are the two schools of thought to which men give allegiance.

Take it in another way: one party assumes (and the fact that on both sides it is no more and no less than an *assumption* that is made, is a fact of tremendous importance), one party assumes that despite the transitoriness of everything which the senses can discover, and despite the impossibility of finding anything which is imperishable and abiding, there *is*, nevertheless, an eternal and imperishable reality—an Absolute which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath been revealed unto the heart of man,"—an Absolute to which they can resort for comfort. Then on the other hand others assume that there is no reality behind this world of fitful appearances. They assert that beyond the flickering lights which flame and die out, and behind the noise and hubbub

of life, there is nothing. In a word, apart from sense experience all is emptiness; and despite the hungry imaginings, and the suggestions which come to us from earth and sea and sky, and the thoughts which well up in our minds as we study; that despite these ideas which we have in such abundance, there is yet nothing to warrant them and they are vain.

Now these two attitudes represent the poles of thought—the antitheses to which men turn as they study the world-problem according as their dispositions drive them; and these two poles we call broadly Idealism and Naturalism. Let us for convenience reduce them to definition by saying that Idealism is that form of thought which assumes that before and beneath phenomena there is a reality and an Absolute upon which all experience depends for its value; and that Naturalism is that form of thought which assumes that there is no reality beyond experience, and that its sole value lies in its momentary capacity to satisfy.

From what has been said before there should be no difficulty in perceiving the meaning of these two elemental forms of constructive thought,<sup>3</sup> and we are

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<sup>3</sup> By constructive thought is to be understood that form of thinking which is occupied in the building of an hypothesis or theory. When one considers a proposition and examines into its merits, he is analyzing, and the results of his thought produce no new conclusion. But when one takes the data of experience, and from them builds by synthesis a theory, he is building constructively.

therefore prepared further to enlarge upon their significance. Let us do so by an illustration. The world must be supplied with theories, just as it must be supplied with food. Without them men's minds would starve just as would their bodies if they were given nothing to eat. For this purpose pioneers must go abroad, and must sail out into the seas of speculative thought and bring back with them, as the result of their commerce, bread for the brains of mankind. The progress and the prosperity and the serenity of the race depend upon the prowess of these navigators into the unknown. We have so little here below to fortify and comfort us, and so few possibilities of happiness are open to us—apart from those which come with the use of the imagination—we are so dependent upon the ideas and the dreams and the hopes and the hints which are brought to us from beyond the range of sense perception, that did not discoverers bring home to us from time to time tales of things beyond the far horizon, we would be stunted and starved by the bleak monotony of life. But the fact is that we do have tales brought to us, and we do have our lives made bright by reports which pioneers bring to us about a land where there is no change and decay, and where the things which we love endure. Now it is—and this is good psychology—from these pictures of a permanent life, and from these “intimations of immortality” that we acquire the strength and the confidence which enable us to press forward. The only thing which saves us from the boredom and the flatness of the sense life is this intelligence of a something which

can give value and worth-while-ness to our otherwise worthless three-score years—of sensations.

Now the two schools of thought about which we are thinking reveal their deepest and their most significant antagonism when they are asked, what is the value of these hopes and expectations which we gather from them who traffic in the unknown seas? When pressed—and it is necessary for us to realize that it is only when pressed that men render their actual and final convictions; half of the trouble in philosophy, and most of the difficulty in the region of religious thought, comes from not pressing the point—when pressed and forced to give an estimate of the value of these things, which few dare deny to be the things which make our lives worth while, we receive from the Naturalist an answer something like this: “All these so-called bits of intelligence which purport to have been brought to us from an extra-empirical world are in the last resort valueless. They may indeed be harmless if not taken too seriously, but in the end, inasmuch as there can be nothing outside of sense experience, the less we allow ourselves to depend on them, or to be led by them, the better.” On the other hand, the Idealist says: “Since we assume that there is a reality beyond the reach of our eyes and ears, then the more intimations that can be brought to us of this kind the better. The fuller the intelligence which is brought to us by the pioneers, the more carefully must we examine it, and if we will but study carefully all that is presented to us, then just so much the larger become our lives, and so much the better our chance of

acquiring some ownership and of taking some part in the things which are real.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the Naturalist, when true to his colors, should absolutely deny the value of all flights of the imaginative or speculative faculty, and discourage by implication all efforts to penetrate beyond the realm of sense; while the Idealist enthusiastically encourages such attempts.<sup>5</sup>

Here then we have the basic difference between these two forms of thought. The Naturalist says, "Be content to remain within your coaling radius; do not seek to sail into unknown seas;" while the Idealist says, "Do not confine yourself to the short voyages for which your coal bunkers provide, but set your sails, and shake yourself free from servitude to machinery, and trusting to the winds of heaven, push off into the uncharted oceans; push off, and do not dream of turning back until you can bring with you food for the minds and souls of the hungry millions." These are, willy nilly, the antipodes of thought to which a man must turn, and these are the principles on which all the world's philosophical theories are built.

It must be evident by now that to be religious, or rather to accept a religious interpretation of the world,

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<sup>4</sup> On the value of the imaginative faculties, see C. C. Everett's "Poetry, Comedy and Duty."

<sup>5</sup> An interesting illustration of the difference between these two attitudes is seen in the contrast between the mockery and the earnest interest exhibited by the Naturalist on the one hand and the Idealist on the other in problems of psychical research.

such as the Christian interpretation, one must be an Idealist. While equally, it should be plain that if the whole truth is in the Naturalist's position, then there is no place in this world for any kind of a religious creed. We have then come to a turning point. Naturalism as such precludes all possibility of Christianity. Some form of Idealism is its necessary presupposition. It is needful, therefore, to follow the logical sequence, and before advancing further to examine this position of the Naturalist in order to find out what its worth is, since so long as it remains across our path as an absolute negation of the value of any fact which is not testified to by the senses, all of our investigations into the nature of religion will be futile.

#### NATURALISM.

Naturalism is almost as old as philosophy. Whilst many of the earliest of the Greek thinkers were naïve Idealists, it was not long before, under the lead of Democritus, another contemporary of Plato, there arose a school which adopted as its standard the statement that matter was everything and mind nothing. In its earlier stages, before an understanding of the relation between experience and the five senses had become clear, Naturalism was merely a crude statement to the effect that matter was everything. Hence in its earlier forms, and in fact up until recent times, as we shall show later on, we call Naturalism "Materialism." It consisted of a blank denial of the existence of anything beyond sensation or which was deducible from sen-



sation. It is further convenient to note that in its early forms Materialism did not find favor.

Conditions in the early days were such that freedom of thought was dangerous. Just as in the Middle Ages men would hardly have dared to defy the doctrines of the Church, so in classical antiquity the temper and the customs and the rights of the people were such as to keep all but small groups from pronounced unbelief.<sup>6</sup>

So long as a people have not advanced beyond the emotional<sup>7</sup> stage, development in the region of speculative thought would be difficult, and belief in the spirit world would be normal. Such was the condition which prevailed in that part of the world which we call Western until the sixteenth century. The theorizings of the Greeks, of the Sophists and Skeptics, and of the Epicureans and Stoics, as well as of their later disciples, and of the so-called Nominalists of the Middle Ages; the theorizings of all these fathers of Naturalism were not popular and obtained no wide acceptance. The Renaissance and the Reformation first broke the ground and cleared the way for the pronounced Materialism of the eighteenth century.

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<sup>6</sup>For the study of the struggle of peoples to free themselves from the tyranny of custom and ecclesiasticism in the world of thought, compare Robertson, "History of Freethought;" Lecky, "History of European Thought;" Benn, "History of Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century," etc.

<sup>7</sup>It must be clearly understood that in this and in all other instances the word "emotion" or "emotional" is used in the old-fashioned sense.

By that time ecclesiastical authority had so waned, and education and enlightenment had so enlarged, that it was no longer possible to hinder the progress of free thought, and we find, therefore, in France and in Germany and in England, systems of Naturalism coming into serious vogue.<sup>8</sup>

The French Revolution, though primarily political and social, came as the culmination of this movement, and we find there the influence of such men as d'Alembert, Diderot, Holbach and Voltaire culminating in the wild and frenzied worship of the Goddess of Reason. This was the commencement of the temporary triumph of Materialism. Men gloried in their animal nature and scorned all suggestions of divine sonship. Now the importance of this movement consists in the fact that for the first time men openly defied authority and convention, and laboriously set at naught the tenets of Idealism. It is unwise ever to ascribe causes to historical events, but we can at least call attention to the fact that this open apostasy in France went without public rebuke or punishment, and we can suggest that inasmuch as it was allowed thus to go unrebuked, it brought to pass the result that the flood-gates of materialistic thought were once and for all opened wide,<sup>9</sup> so that it became possible for the first

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<sup>8</sup>For a useful summary of these developments compare Farrar's lectures on the "History of Interpretation," and Nash's "History of Higher Criticism."

<sup>9</sup>This is a general statement which holds good, despite the several prosecutions which occurred in England in the early nineteenth century.

time to publish without fear of hindrance any and all kinds of materialistic literature.

We have thus far glanced at the history of the origin and rise of modern Naturalism, since an understanding thereof throws light on the present situation. The problem which confronts us to-day must be considered in relation to its rise, if we are to deal wisely and fairly with it. To put it concisely, the situation of the moment is the natural result of two factors: The first, the sudden freedom which was given to men in matters speculative; the second, the stupendous advance which, as a result of the new-found freedom, was made in the world of research. The wall of public opinion and ecclesiastical prejudice having been broken down almost in a night, men rushed into the breach tumultuously, and as they are always apt to do when they gain a sudden victory, they went too far. A tidal wave of Materialism developed which may be said to have reached its culmination in the seventies of the last century. Criticism became skepticism and skepticism turned to negation. This movement became so general that, as a learned man (Bishop Creighton) tells us, it took real courage for a cultivated man to admit that he believed in anything beyond the range of sense experience.

The nineteenth century became thus preëminently a century of revolt against Idealism; of the apotheosis of the senses; of empiricism. Beginning in the thirties and forties, the movement, inspired by the economic, political and scientific advances (to which we owe so much) began to grow. Its significance, and the con-

clusions to which it would lead, were not at first appreciated. If ever there was an awakening, a period of orientation; if ever men searched out their hearts, and if ever sincerity came into full bloom it came with this movement. If, therefore, we call the nineteenth century preëminently a century of Materialism, we must call it also, preëminently the century of sincerity. Men no longer allowed their religion to be hollow and perfunctory. They tested every thought and every doctrine and every hypothesis and every tradition. Tennyson's saying, that honest doubt was better than half the creeds, epitomizes the intellectual atmosphere of the time. In history men began to doubt long accepted statements; in biology they examined and then rejected the theories of their teachers; in economics they started new schools, and literary criticism questioned the long-accepted texts of the classics. Everything which had been believed to be certain and fixed was subjected to an examination. What wonder that in this "boom" of empiricism matters went too far, and that the writers of books fell over on to the wrong side; what wonder that the world of thought was revolutionized and demoralized.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> No study is more interesting than that of the gradual development of critical thought in the nineteenth century. At first but a few small voices were heard, such for example as that of Francis Newman in his "Theism, Doctrinal and Practical," or of Blanco White, whose life presents an excellent picture of the beginnings of the movement in an individual instance. But gradually the numbers increased, and while the virulence diminished, yet the general tone deepened, until by

It was this period of recapitulation and destruction which prepared the way for the problem with which the Christian Apologist has now to deal. This is an important point, since it relieves us of the necessity of dealing with such obsolete forms of unbelief as Atheism or Deism or Polytheism. Such have long since been relegated to the same ash heap whereon are strewn the theories of the divine right of kings or the verbal inspiration of Holy Writ, as well as those folk-lore tales of ancient Rome which men used to accept as history. That to which we have to attend, as a result of the purging process which occupied the major part of the nineteenth century, is Empiricism, or, as we must now begin to call it, Naturalism. We are concerned, in other words, with that modern condition—the natural result of the last hundred years—in which men say that they will accept as true only those things which can be scientifically proven. What has to be faced by the Apologist is the concise problem

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1870 we have a loud chorus of protesting voices asserting their independence of traditional belief. We would refer generally to such writers as George Eliot, A. H. Clough, J. A. Froude, Ernest Renan, Matthew Arnold, Harriet Martineau, Herbert Spencer, T. H. Huxley; with these may be associated, in order to illustrate the tendency of the times, such writers as Jowett, H. B. Wilson, Rowland Williams, Bishop Colenso, Mark Pattison. But this whole subject is too large to be more than hinted at, and the reader is heartily urged to examine such books as A. W. Benn's "History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century," or for a profounder study, J. T. Merz's "History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century."

as to whether it is reasonable to accept anything which cannot pass the physical tests applied by modern science. The problem, in a word, is that of the choice between scientific Naturalism and Idealism. If we would begin at the bottom and ask the question which is vital to-day, we must begin here.

Now it is most important that this issue should be made perfectly plain, since it is not commonly recognized or acknowledged. As a matter of fact, despite the real simplicity of the issue, it becomes at times a complicated question in which the elements are as follows: first, many who reject the claims of religion claim to be Idealists; second, they indignantly deny that they are Materialists, upon the implied basis that thoroughgoing Empiricism and Idealism are compatible; thirdly, they style themselves Naturalists (and this is what we have been working towards for some time), and by Naturalism they seem to mean an Empiricism which yet allows validity to the creations of the imagination.

It is necessary at this point for us to digress at some length in order to make it evident, by its reduction to its lowest terms, that the position we have been describing is untenable, inasmuch as it is an endeavor to bring together the antipodes of thought. Men and women of to-day who boast themselves to be free-thinkers, such as the Agnostics, or the Ethical Culturists, or the Positivists, or the New Religionists, or such like—Christians who assert that they recite the creed “with reservations”; all of these proclaim themselves to be the Idealists of the world *par excel-*

lence. In fact the word Naturalism would seem to have been taken in order to act as a slogan which would not, as does Materialism, become a *prima facie* rejection of Idealism as such. The adherents of this phase of thought do in many instances actually claim for themselves the exclusive right to use the term Idealist, asserting that Christians with their anthropomorphic God and their Sacraments and their insistence on organization are in reality *the* Materialists. This is no idle protest, since from their point of view, and with their conception of the faith of the religious man, it appears that they have some right to their position. But the only way in which this assertion can be met is to expose the impossibility of mating Idealism with Naturalism. Despite their sublimated form of religion — their æstheticism, or their Hedonism, or their humanitarianism, it is not too much to say that their position is a logical contradiction.

What then is the basis upon which the Naturalist believes, implicitly or explicitly, in his Idealism? It is this: he would say that his patronage of the arts, and his interest in cosmic theories is a sufficient basis upon which to take his stand.

When we ask, once again, what these two schools of antipathetic thought imply, and reduce them to their lowest terms, we find that the Naturalist possesses no logical or scientific right to this position. For example, Idealism implies that there is a meaning to life, and a significance to experience, and that the labors of the imaginative faculty are not utterly in vain. It implies that human life is a sign and a sacrament of

something higher, and that sense experience is but the shell. Idealism can mean no less than the belief that sense data are not our last resort. Any use made of the imaginative faculties stultifies itself unless this possibility of a significance in its products be allowed. Such is the essence of Idealism. On the other hand, Naturalism, in whatever form one chooses to take it, depends ultimately upon the assumption, or the thesis, that there is no significance in any of the ideas which result from the use of the imagination. Logically, it means, so far as we are concerned, that we have no right to hearken to any information save that which comes to us through the senses; and hence, irresistibly hence, that which comes to us in any other way, artistic ideals, or poetic intimations, or aspirations, or cosmic emotions—that these ought not to be regarded as valid guides. Logically, there is no place in the mind of him who says that the natural channels are the only legitimate channels for creations of the imaginative faculty. All of this would seem to be too self-evident to deserve mention, but it so happens that modern Naturalists seek to escape this dilemma, and that of all the dreamers, and of all the devotees to Idealism, these same pseudo-empiricists unwittingly are the worst.

But now the question must be asked, What are these thinkers if they are not Idealists? They surely have their communion with the unseen world, and draw largely upon other than sense channels of information. What are they then? They are one of two things: either they are not what they claim to be; or they are



pure emotionalists, or Pantheists, or Pagans; believing in nothing, and yet parasites who luxuriate in the thrills which come from contemplating the length and the breadth and the width of the world.<sup>11</sup>

One of the problems then which confronts the Christian Apologist is that of pseudo-Naturalism. It is the outcome of the turmoil of the last century, and of the upsetting of so many minds by a too hasty acceptance of the conclusions reached by the extremists of that period. We frequently meet men and women who assert that they can allow no element in their creed which is supernatural—which is not empirically demonstrable. They posit physical experience as the basis of their belief; to psychical experience they deny a hearing; on revelation they turn with a snarl. The so-called supernatural is for them superstition, and yet they claim the right to be called Idealists, and repudiate the term Materialist. We can only ask them to be consistent. We must drive them either to an absolute rejection of their traffic in ideas, or else to an admission that they are, in truth, in fundamental agreement with the basic principle upon which religion rests—the principle of supernaturalism. It is most desirable in dealing with this type of mind to clear away these misrepresentations of the fundamental facts. If the many who continue to assert their allegiance to the religious interpretation of the world can only be brought to understand that this is a logical impossibility upon the Naturalistic hypothesis, it will

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<sup>11</sup> Compare the chapter on Phases of Naturalism.

be possible to discuss the matter with some hope of a result, but so long as a man tries to hold to these two fundamentally antagonistic propositions: first, that the world is susceptible of religious interpretation; secondly, that no information is valid except it comes through sense channels—so long as a man holds to these two assertions, which are mutually exclusive, argument and discussion are to no purpose.

From this digression into which we have been led we must now return to the subject proper, that of the choice between Idealism and Naturalism. We have endeavored to show that the study of Philosophy brings a man to this dilemma: that he has to choose between these two schools of thought, and that as he chooses, he is either religious or non-religious. But as has already been pointed out, before one can consider the possibility of religion, it is necessary to deal with the problem of its impossibility—it is incumbent upon us to ask why we should not be Naturalists, and why we should not go through life upon the hypothesis that there is nothing beyond sense data, and why we should not affirm that existence is no more than an endeavor to work within the boundaries of the five senses. This is the first problem in Philosophical Apologetics, so to it let us turn.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE INSUFFICIENCY OF NATURALISM.

**W**E are to inquire now whether or no we must resign all of our religious aspirations and yield to the interpretation of the Universe given by the Naturalist. Until we have disposed of this question all further philosophizing and all Apologetics will be futile. Must we then accept as truth the interpretation of those who say that the only value which belongs to experience is its momentary capacity to satisfy? Must we admit that this is the basis upon which all life is to be interpreted?

On hearing this question there at once rushes into our minds the thought that as a matter of fact there is no room in a discussion of philosophy for so much even as a mention of Naturalism, since, as such, the Naturalist cannot be a philosopher. Further, we realize that he has no right to use this word "interpretation," since it implies and calls into the argument more than his hypothesis allows for. Let us enlarge upon these thoughts and gain therefrom an appreciation of the issues which are at stake.

The Naturalist, it is to be repeated, would tell us that the true interpretation of life is to be found in that theory which would reduce the value of experience to its momentary capacity to satisfy. To this it is to be at once replied, by way of opening up the ar-

gument and laying bare the issue at stake, that he who would allow to experience no other value than its momentary capacity to please has no right to speak of "interpreting" life, inasmuch as to "interpret" is to deal with a subject in a way denied the Naturalist by his first premise. To "interpret" means to treat a thing as if it were more than a mechanical object; it means to deal with it as if there were something about it which was not patent to sense experience. To "interpret" a thing means to draw out from it a *meaning*, and to approach it in this way is to assume that there is some mysterious unity about it—that it is a "whole"—by which we mean an organized something which is beyond the range of sense verification. For example, I interpret the life about me or the world in which I move, and when I do so the result is quite different from the result I would have reached had I treated it as if it were but a piece of mechanism. In one case I arrive at an undemonstrable hypothesis, in the other at a demonstrable formula.

In other words, interpretation is a philosophical activity, and from such an activity the Naturalist who allows no hidden meaning is debarred. The Idealist alone can interpret, since he begins by assuming an hidden unity within the object, and to interpret is merely to seek for this unity. Put it in another way: Philosophy by interpretation deals with "wholes" as organized aggregations, while science deals with them as collections of parts. To the one, "whole" means something spiritual, to the other it signifies but a mean-

ingless bundle of parts. Now avowedly Naturalism is not by its hypothesis competent to deal with or to consider such things as an idealistic "whole," since being an idea it is not and cannot be a matter of experience. We experience an ocean or a tree, but not the "world." What is "world," for example, but a term or idea used by us to express or interpret the unity of which these oceans and forests are but parts? There is but one explanation for our ever desiring to make use of interpretation, and that is the assumed presence of something which is beyond the range of our senses. A single object as long as it is an object of sensation—that is to say, as long as it is a single object—is not a thing calling for interpretation. But the moment it becomes in our minds related to other objects—that is to say, the moment it becomes part of a whole—it acquires an element of mystery. Anything in relation to anything else is mysterious, since a relation is not a thing which can be experienced, but is rather a creation of the interpreter only. Now we assert that as a system which is not concerned with the mysterious, but with the non-mysterious; as a system which deals only with matters of experientiable fact, Naturalism has no right to deal in interpretation.

We have allowed ourselves to become involved in this difficult subject because it was necessary that we be led into a discussion which it suggests. We have opened the way to a point which is of vital importance by thus questioning the Naturalist's right to indulge

in interpretations. The point is the difference between abstract and concrete reasoning.<sup>1</sup>

There are two ways in which we may consider things, either in their relatedness to the rest of the world, or in their out-of-relatedness. We may be either synthetic or analytic. We may study, for example, a flower by the wayside in these opposite ways: first, we may examine it in its relation to the universe; and when we do so, we think of the soil which produced it, and of the ages which produced the soil; of the geological and geographical conditions which are involved; of the climate of the locality, and of its atmospheric peculiarities; of the glacial activities which in the first instance produced the soil; of the sun which warms it, or of the snow which fertilizes it; of the people who planted it, and why they planted here and not there; hence we are led to discuss their æsthetic ambitions, and their love for the beautiful. Thus we can continue to pursue the investigation until we have brought that little flower into relation with the heavens and with the earth and with the hearts of men, and this is what we call concrete or synthetic thinking; thinking of a thing in the plenitude of its relatedness.

But, on the other hand, we may study a flower in an abstract or analytic way. Instead of seeing or seeking its relations, we seek its isolation. We try to discover what it is as differentiated from the world which it helps to glorify; and so we separate it from its sur-

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<sup>1</sup> Compare Illingworth's "Reason and Revelation."

roundings, and we take it from the plant which nurtured it, and we shake the dust from off it, and we carry it into our laboratories, and we dissect it, and we try to think of it only as it is there separated from everything in heaven and earth. With the botanist we reduce it to its lowest terms, and we discover the peculiarities which it possesses and which make it different from, not only the trees and rocks, but from that neighboring flower which looks so much like it. This is the abstract way of examining a thing. It is the process by which we abstract the flower from its environment.

Now these two modes of thought represent the fundamental processes involved in philosophical thinking on the one hand, and scientific or empirical on the other, and the point to be made unmistakable is that Naturalism bases its entire right to existence, and makes its appeal to the world upon the ground that it thinks abstractly, or scientifically. This must be clearly grasped. The entire argument of the Naturalist resides in his rejection of the concrete method of thought.

But we must make this plain by examining Naturalism. If the student will read any book upon the subject he will find that the Naturalist *constructs* a Universe! Now it is in this very constructive act that he makes an irretrievable blunder. He begins with his premise that the only data to be accepted are those which are proven to be genuine in sense experience. So far he cannot be criticised, but he begins to blunder when he commences his generaliza-

tions; when he begins postulating a *complete* and extra-empirical Universe; when he constructs, not only sidereal systems—no one can object to that; when he builds not only nebular hypotheses—no one can object to that; but when he goes beyond these generalizations and creates with his materials a complete cosmos—a whole—a whole which is not an observable object; and when he thus makes something which is not empirically verifiable he betrays his own cause and fails in his mission.

Or perhaps it will become clearer what we are after if we put it in a negative way. The Naturalist in his building operations so fills the universe as to exclude everything which is not a part of his process. Now there is no difference between denying a thing openly and excluding it from one's system. There is no difference between affirming the sufficiency of one's materials and denying the efficiency—if not invalidity—of what one refuses to use. If I claim to be able to create a complete cosmos with matter and motion, then I do what is equivalent to rejecting all mind and spirit, and this is what the Naturalist does. He dogmatically—that is the crucial point—he dogmatically excludes from the universe which he creates everything which is not what he calls “natural”—Naturalism means that everything is natural—and he purports to account for, aye, more, to create out of natural materials, a complete universe. This is where he commits the unpardonable philosophic sin—the sin of endeavoring to build that which is super-natural out of natural materials. For, if what has been said above be



understood, it must be evident that a universe as a "whole" is something which is as such beyond experience—it is an idea, and as such is beyond the limits allowed to the adherent of empiricism.

And yet the Naturalist seeks to gain or to give a conception of this same philosophical "whole," and this very step lays him open to censure. If he would be content to remain within natural limits, and not seek or claim to construct his "whole," his position would not be open to this criticism; but the moment he puts the suffix *"ism"* to his theory he stands convicted of a logical and a philosophical contradiction.

This is, then, the philosophical objection to the system which goes under the name of Naturalism. It attempts to do what its premises forbid. It is by its hypothesis non-philosophical, and yet it pretends to philosophical conclusions. It has the right only to treat of "parts," and combinations of "parts," but it goes about the making of a "whole." It becomes discontented with its confines, and strikes out into those unknown regions into which it has, ex-hypothesis, no right to venture. It exceeds its charter rights. If it allowed a possible validity to that which "wholes" suggest, whether they be microcosmic or macrocosmic, then would we be unable to assail it as we do. But its fundamental thesis prevents it from becoming an *"ism,"* and blocks the path to any but combinations and collections of parts.

If to this it be replied that it does not care to exceed its limits; if it be contended that it is content to remain within its limits, and does not seek to create

an "universal" or a "whole;" if, in other words, it yield its right to dogmatize about the *complete* cosmos; then we answer immediately that it has no right to exclude from the universe the so-called supernatural, since if it cannot, and does not pretend to deal with the whole, then it has no right to say what must be excluded. Its jurisdiction holds only over the territory it claims to rule; if it grant that there may be more, then it has no right to say what may or what may not go towards the creation of that whole.

But it may be answered that the Naturalist merely says that no one has the right to dogmatize or to deal with that part of the whole which lies beyond the region of experience. If this is said, if our friend who believes in empirical knowledge only yields to the argument against his treating of "wholes" upon the condition that no one else be allowed to treat of them; if he thus denies to all the right of speculating about that which goes towards the completion of this universe, of which, according to the length of time we are allowed here, we can know only a part; then we reply that he has forsaken his *positive* naturalism and assumed the role of a *negative* agnostic. Now Agnosticism is another matter, and one with which we shall deal later on (see page 105), so let us turn to a side issue which this subject has suggested.

#### RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

At this point, parenthetically (for it deserves only parenthetic notice), we may take up that most popular

discussion of the relation between religion and science; a problem which in proportion to its popularity has been fertile in puerilities. The saying goes that religion and science are opposed the one to the other, and, as a matter of fact, the time has not yet passed when well informed people still think that this is so, and fulminate accordingly against science.

In the middle of the last century when the thorough and widespread investigation of which we have spoken was at its height, party lines were by the exigencies of the situation tightly drawn, and these same exigencies were responsible for the vast misunderstanding of this matter. It was not unnatural in the days when scientists were revelling in the splendor of their new discoveries, and when new knowledge and new ideas were drenching a dried-up world, that men should have lost their equilibrium, and in the heat of controversy, and under the spell of an amazing situation, should have been led into thinking that religion and science were antagonistic the one to the other. Certain it is that the prejudices on the one side and the preconceived opinions on the other became so intense that the partisans of these two subjects did themselves the gross injustice of anathematizing each other. Now, however, that the heat of the controversy has passed away, and that we are no longer blinded by a multitude of novelties, we are able to see that in reality there is no opposition between religion and science, but that they are, on the contrary, related to each other as parent to child.

To say that the study of the ways of God is inim-

ical to the study of the atom or the star, is just as preposterous as it would be to say that the man who studies race history is opposed to the man who studies physiological psychology. The one is studying an universal concept, the other a particular thing; the one is interested in the whole of humanity, the other in a part. But let us illustrate: Two men are watching a regiment march down the street, one of them is interested in the fit of the uniform of a friend there in the front rank; he looks at the coat with its rows of glittering buttons; he looks at the cap with the insignia on the front of it; he looks at the shoulders and wonders when cross-bars may be there; and so watching this individual he forgets the marching regiment of which his friend is but a member, and his thoughts are concentrated upon the individual in whom he is interested, and upon whose character and future he speculates. As for the other spectator, he is not interested in any individual. The regiment, with its swinging stride and its great momentum and its purpose to reach the front; the regiment as a whole, starting out into an uncertain future, with one aim and one end in view; the regiment marching towards one far off patriotic event; that is what the other spectator sees. Shall we say that these two spectators are opposed to each other? Shall we not rather say that the one is interested in a detail, and can see naught else, while the other is interested in a national movement?

Such is the relation between the students of religion and science. Science is interested in specialization, re-

ligion in generalization; science abstracts things from their environment, religion tries to get the concrete view of them as parts of the environment; science segregates, religion aggregates; science is for detail, religion for wholesale; science for indexes of life, religion for its whole vast story; science distributes into their several spheres as many of the facts in regard to existence as it can collect, and writes down formulæ; religion collects, and from its collections suggests thoughts upon "wholes" of existence; science sees a pile of atoms, religion sees the majestic mountain with its peaks pointing toward the sky. So therefore instead of dealing with antagonistic theories, we are dealing merely with opposite aspects of life; aspects, which complement each other, and of their very nature cannot contradict. On the contrary, religion incorporates and swallows up science as the world's poetry engulfs the dictionary. Into the poem can be brought—and will be when God's poem, the perfect poem, is written—all of the words in the world; but the words when put into that poem will mean far more than they can ever mean in their defined distinctness in the lexicon. The publishers of a dictionary tell us that they have collected 317,000 words—barren, helpless, useless words—but the words in a poem cannot be added; or rather if they were its writer would not advertise their number as a recommendation of its grandeur. The poem is a whole, and as such it is above enumeration, and in it the lower reaches of life are left behind, and we mount from

out of the land of analytical calculation and definition into the glorious abode of God.

Once again, science is interested in telling us such things as the number of words in a poem, while the theologian dwells only upon the poem idea. Science is the concordance and religion is the Bible idea. They are in nowise antipathetic; the bigger and better the concordance the better off humanity. It is impossible for us to have too large a concordance, but we never dream that the concordance is an equivalent to the Bible, or that the sum of its words is an equivalent to the poem. The one is mechanical and beyond question most helpful to the student; the other is living and feeds us with the bread of life.

Now, as a matter of fact, the scholar in his investigation into the details of his subject is supported and nourished by the inspiration which comes from those who regard life from the opposite point of view. What scientist, for example, could endure the monotony of his occupation; what investigator could stand the humdrum life of the laboratory, had he not such ideals and such wholes as the thought of "utility" or "truth" to encourage him? The theologian and the scientist are friends and not enemies, and though they work for ends which are utterly different, yet their inspiration comes from the same source—the desire to help and to benefit mankind. And so realizing this we no longer commit the blunder of thinking that science and religion are opposed to each other. We see on the contrary that they are mutually helpful, and that the more the one prospers the better for the other.

In the light of what we have said let us sum up our exposition of the philosophical objection to Naturalism. It all amounts to this: by reason of its programme and fundamental intention Naturalism, as such—as an “ism,” as a theory about a “whole”—has no right to exist. The Naturalist is the renegade scientist who, beginning honestly, wearies of the confines of his work; wearies of the sense boundary by which he is hemmed in and seeks for wider fields of operation. Thus it is that he gives up his proper trade of analyzing, he leaves his last, and starts synthesizing, and lo! he to whom philosophy is by its very programme nonsensical, becomes a philosopher! He has betrayed his birthright and does not deserve consideration! The moment a man adopts a cosmic theory and seeks to encompass the utmost bounds of the universe with his definitions, and at the same time holds to the finality of empiricism, in that moment he loses his claim to the confidence of the philosophic world.

#### THE SCIENTIFIC OBJECTION OF NATURALISM.

In the last subdivision we endeavored to make plain why we believe ourselves to be justified as philosophers in rejecting the naturalistic interpretation of life. Let us now be more aggressive, and carrying the assault into the enemy's country, find flaws in his argument from the scientific point of view.

Upon a subject of this kind we have to speak most carefully, since if we venture too far, we shall become too deeply involved to make extrication possible within such limits as are allowed by a book of this length.

However, to a certain depth we must venture if we would make our re-examination of the matter worth while. Let us therefore begin by stating just what the naturalistic hypothesis, from the scientific point of view, is. Briefly it is, that the universe can be completely explained by natural processes, and that the whole range of animate experience and inanimate existence can be brought within chemical and mathematical definition and description. It is asserted that given the chemical formulæ for the various elements (hydrogen, oxygen, chlorine, etc.) ; and given the laws of energy according to which bodies are attracted or repelled; that given these laws and facts of matter and motion in everything from a star to a soul, it would be possible to explain the cosmic process; to explain the movements and the variations of each and every object from the revolutions of the planets down to the strangest of experiences through which human personalities may pass; to explain why Halley's comet returned in 1909, and why Napoleon miscalculated at Waterloo. It is claimed that all that is required is a sufficiency of data in order that the whole movement of the universe may be set down in the mathematical formula. It is admitted, to be sure, that we cannot, or at least that we probably never shall, collect sufficient data to enable us actually to explain all of these things; and it is admitted that there will always be large lacunæ in our knowledge; but granting the limitations to which as short-lived mortals we are subject, it is nevertheless asserted that if we *could* amass the facts, and if we



could have the different data of heredity and environment, then it *would* be possible to explain the past, as well as to foretell the future.

In a word, all is matter and motion, and as the German Materialist put it, "the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile." Thoughts and purposes are like the autumn leaves which are driven before the winds, which winds themselves result from certain conditions of atmospheric pressure. All is subject to law, and freedom is an empty dream. The universe is no more incomprehensible than a glass of water; it differs only in degree; both can be reduced in the end to a mathematical and chemical formula.

Such from the scientific point of view is the Naturalistic hypothesis. We have necessarily repeated much that was said in characterizing it in the previous section, but we cannot get this matter too distinctly before us.

Now what shall be said to these pretensions of the chemist and mathematician? We have endeavored, to begin with, to make it plain that with science religion has no quarrel whatever. We have extended this and said that the more the mathematician and the chemist discover, the better for the theologian. With empirical effort religion is in deepest harmony, as should be abundantly clear from all that has gone before. In fact this essay largely bases, on the values derived from experience, its argument for faith. As a matter of fact, it is just because of this that it takes up the cudgels in order to dispute the claims of Natural-

ism; since being solicitous for the welfare of science it resents the unscientific actions of the Naturalist.

It might be put in this way: *accuracy* is the watch-word of empirical science, and accurate it must be in all its work. But it is impossible for it to be utterly accurate in all of its generalizations, and yet, it insists on treating them as if they were exact. To illustrate:<sup>2</sup> chemical laws which are the data wherewith the Naturalist works, come from experimentation. Now in every experiment it is of necessity—and for laboratory purposes—assumed that certain things are what they are not. The scales, the measures, the atmospheric pressure, the eyes of the student, the touch, the ears, and the sense of smell or the sense of taste of the investigator—these are all assumed to be normal, while as a matter of fact they never are normal. The scales are not competent to give at all times the same result; consistent atmospheric pressure cannot be obtained; the senses of the experimenter are affected by a thousand little things. The simple truth is that in the simplest experiments identical results are, because of this variability of the means employed, seldom obtained. So our chemist makes a large number of experiments, and adding up all of his results gives us as his conclusion, the average. We have then in our text-books for the weight of an atom of oxygen the *average* result of countless experiments. This is

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<sup>2</sup>For an enlargement of this subject see Ward: "Naturalism and Agnosticism." A. J. Balfour: "Foundations of Belief." J. P. Cooke: "Credentials of Science."

perfectly proper, and forms, as experience proves, for special scientific purposes a reliable working basis. All the achievements of science have resulted from these approximate figures, and with them the worst bigot can find no fault.

The difficulty comes in when this approximate figure, that is sufficient and successful for intensive abstract and analytical work, is used too much for extensive, concrete, or synthetic work; when not content with a few laws in regard to the workings of certain of the forces and materials in this world, the Naturalist seeks to reach out beyond the confines of the earth and construct through chemical dynamics a universe. This is a serious difficulty. It is one of degree rather than of kind; the fault coming when one exceeds the license which is allowed in the direction of synthesis. We can tolerate a certain amount of generalizing; this is necessary and is scientifically proper; but it is *unnecessary*, and therefore unscientific and improper, to go beyond certain fixed limits. In a word the moment the investigator exceeds the regions of *necessity* with his syntheses (and the scientist himself will admit that all laws are but necessary applications of the synthetic principle in order to assist the furtherance of analysis), in that moment does he commit the great scientific sin, and this is exactly what Naturalism does.

Put it in another way: So long as students continue to narrow their horizons and to focus their lenses upon smaller objects, so long can they go ahead safely and obtain, not only average but approximately correct results. Whatever error results from their calcula-

tions will always be evident and therefore innocuous, and the approximation of their formulæ will never be overlooked. But the moment they begin to widen their field of study, and to extend their operations into the unknown and unfathomable depths of experience, they then enter upon a course of certain destruction. The difficulty lies in the fact that as one progresses in this direction, the enlarging of his subject makes him forget and overlook the approximateness of his premises. It is impossible for one in extensive work to keep, as can be done in intensive work, account of variations. For example, an error of one one-thousandth in the weight of an atom can do no harm as long as we continue to deal with single atoms or small groups, but once we undertake cosmic thought, and deal with that which comprises worlds upon worlds, our initial error of one one-thousandth assumes such proportions as to be no longer negligible, and our formula for the macrocosm no longer possesses the value which belongs to our microcosmic formulæ.

This argument can be applied in two degrees: one, we can insist upon the unscientific character of all *unnecessary* generalizations; by which we mean all generalizations beyond those laws which are induced from and for the purpose of understanding nature; and, secondly, we can assert specifically that the domains of character and human personality are without the region of necessity, and that all applications of scientific Naturalism therein are as unpardonable as they are uncertain. The chemical formula, for example, with which the naturalist would build his cosmos is

made up of the same principles as those employed in creating the economic man; but just as economists are coming to understand that Ruskin<sup>3</sup> knew more than those who ridiculed him—that there is no such thing as an economic man, and hence that there is no application of the politico-economic laws to be made upon that principle; so also must they realize that there is no perfect atom, and no perfect atmosphere, and no perfect measure, and hence no final or universal application for scientific laws.

To put this in another way: the endeavor of the Naturalist to make a universe can in a way be likened to the effort of the translator to produce "Faust." The ideas can be conveyed into another language, and the plot set down, and the poetry carried over, but it is at best an approximate result that is reached. "Faust" in English is not "Faust," and never can be. The fine shadings of the poetry are lost; the infinitesimal suggestions and plays upon words; the element of onomatopœia, and the psychological significance of certain monosyllables; all of these are lost, and though for practical purposes we have the same drama, in reality it is another drama in a totally different atmosphere. Even so when men try to translate this world of sin and sorrow, and seed-time and harvest, and earthquakes and calms into a mathematical formula; when

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<sup>3</sup> Compare Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olive," "Unto This Last," and his economic writings generally, wherein is taught what we might call personal as opposed to utilitarian economics.

they try to reduce to matter and motion everything from the tides of the ocean to the thoughts of the poor man; when they try to make this translation, though they may get for practical purposes and for text-book usages what appears to be the same world, in reality they have obtained another world, with another kind of creature, and an atmosphere such as never was or will be breathed by man. In a word, the result is not exact, and therefore not scientific.

#### PRACTICAL OBJECTIONS TO NATURALISM.

A third objection to this endeavor to reduce the universe to a chemico-dynamic formula, is that if it were successful it would be intellectually suicidal. As an alternative solution of the world-problem it cannot content the human mind. This is so because it leaves the human mind out of its reckoning. It is an attempt to escape one's shadow, or to stand upon one's own shoulders.

To be explicit: the Naturalist thinks, and then discounts the value of his thinking by his definition of thought. He affirms that he believes in his conclusion because, as a man, he is bound to accept all conclusions, however disagreeable they may be to him, if they are logical and reasonable. He affirms that his conclusion is the only one to which an unbiased man can come. So far so good! The conclusion is accepted, mark you, because of its reasonableness and freedom from bias. But this is exactly what is not the case according to the hypothesis with which the student set out; since according to his basic principle he has never

had any choice between bias, and freedom from bias; and there has never been a question of reasonableness or unreasonableness; since *choice* between reason and unreason is a matter of free will, and he, according to his hypothesis, possesses no free will. He therefore had no choice to begin with. What then? Simply that he has come to his conclusion because he had to; because the laws of heredity and environment gave it him. In a word, bias and unreasonableness have had nothing to do with the matter, and our Naturalist is no more logical than any one else.

The forces of the cosmos, the influence of the ages, the circling of the stars, and all the whole world of force brought him to his definition by a relentless process. So reason and perspicacity, as a picking and choosing between right and wrong and light and darkness, have had nothing to do with his investigations, and his superior claim to level-headedness and good judgment is worthless—upon his own hypothesis. His theory is, on the contrary, but the same kind of a product as the falling of a star or the ripening of an apple, or any of the other predestined events in the cosmic process.

As Professor James puts it in his essay on the "Dilemma of Determinism": the determinist if he carried out his theory must end in hopeless pessimism. He may struggle with all his might and main to reach a reasonable solution to his problem, and then in the end he awakens to the fact that he has not been struggling—since struggling implies freedom—but rather that he has been driven by blind, reasonless force.

How, then, is he to value his solution? Why should it have any particular merit, humanly speaking? Why should it be held up as the best and the truest? What right has it to any more attention—*upon the naturalistic basis*—than the idealistic solution, since *reason* as a thing of human value has had no more to do with its discovery than with the idealist's discovery of God?

This is a far-reaching question and one which we can press relentlessly. We can ask whether Idealism and its belief in God is not equally as much a product of heredity and environment, and as such worthy, humanly and scientifically speaking, of the same attention as the naturalistic solution? It must be if the naturalistic hypothesis be right. Given two leaves driven before the storm, one of which lands upon a flower bed and the other upon the desk of a learned man—what right has the leaf upon the learned man's desk to say to the one upon the flower bed, "My judgment is better than yours and my conclusions more reliable, for behold you lie upon a useless flower bed and I upon the desk of a world benefactor!" Judgment had nothing to do with these two cases; the wind has done it all; the leaves have been passive objects of its course. Even so with the naturalistic thinker; his judgment has had nothing to do with his result; the cosmic force has driven him, and his superior claim to a better power of discrimination is absurd—unless he give up the whole background of his theory and assert that he possesses the power to choose between good and evil—unless, in a word, he asserts that he has the power of free choice.



The naturalistic position then drives one into intellectual pessimism, since none of its results possess anything but necessity behind them, and since with them goes inevitably the feeling of futility and helplessness; the feeling that they have no right to be considered on the ground of their intrinsic reasonableness, since they are but one of the many results of the storm and stress of life.

Such a theory as opposed to Idealism it is to be submitted is not practical, and hence not worthy of attention. The human mind would not develop were it compelled to assume the pessimistic position. In order to act at all mind needs optimism. The fundamental requirement—the basic necessity for the production of a theory, and for the creation of an hypothesis, and for the construction of a system—even of Naturalism—is hopefulness! In order to build a structure of any kind, theoretical or practical, the intellect must possess in the first place faith in its power of discrimination. This is a psychological necessity. Something must always start from somewhere, and the environment from which the investigator must start is the environment of optimism. As well try to jump when suspended in the air as to start theorizing when suspended in pessimism. In Naturalism we have such a blow dealt to the value of judgment that if accepted in the first place it would be impossible for the theorist to proceed one step.

It is for this reason that we asseverate that not only is Naturalism confronted by a practical objection of insuperable proportions, but that it would never have

come into existence at all had its "interpretation" of life been accepted as true. As an hypothesis it is a practical impossibility; it may be interesting to men as a theory, but in reality it can never be received.

#### THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

One of the subsidiary subjects in a discussion of this kind is that of the freedom of the will. We have alluded to it in the first part and suggested it in the present discussion. It is best in this connection to state the idealistic position. In the first place one must admit that the whole problem is beyond the pale of discussion; since being elemental and ultimate its real issues are inexpressible. We can never discuss a thing unless we can separate ourselves from it, as it were, and then viewing it from the distance bring it within the compass of our thought. This question cannot be thus segregated and consequently is not open to normal discussion. We cannot, as Mr. Jack puts it in his "Alchemy of Thought," "beg, borrow or steal a point of view clear outside the universe," and hence we cannot see freedom as a thing-other-than-ourselves. In all matters of this kind it is purely a question of the personal equation.

It is impossible for one to argue with a man who declares that his will is not free. We cannot disprove his statement, any more than we can read his thoughts, or influence his judgment. Nor on the other hand can he debate with us when we assert that our will is free. We would remove, therefore, this question about the freedom of the will out

of the domain of discursive reasoning and place it in the region of human needs. Such is the tendency of the best modern thought. As a practical solution to the world-problem we believe that it is the wisest, and that upon utilitarian grounds it is necessary to believe in it. We admit that the case against it is conclusive, scientifically speaking, but we deny that scientific values are germane in this instance.

But what is to be understood by the term, "freedom of the will"? This is a question which still demands an answer. The old theory—the explanation given in pre-scientific days by theologians generally—was that it consisted simply in the ability to do at any time exactly as one pleased. It was intended and understood to mean the power of uninfluenced choice. We can no longer, however, hold to such an inexact definition. It entirely sets at naught and overlooks the influences of heredity and environment. It disregards too many things which actually do influence choice.

In opposition to this "uninfluenced choice" theory is that of the Naturalist, who would have it that man has no more freedom than have the leaves which are driven before the storm. According to this theory—which is that to which we have already referred above in speaking indefinitely of the man who denies that he is free—there is no such thing as an act which is not the result of certain objective and definite influences or causes; if there were, it is pointed out, then the reign of law is not universal. If I can do something which is not caused by external and previous happen-

ings, then am I a lawbreaker — a miracle worker! According to this school of thought then every act of such a nature would be miraculous.

Now in distinct mediation between these opposing theories is that which we may call that of "self-identification," and it is the one which is here adopted. According to it, freedom is "man's power of becoming a veritable cause to himself, in making personally his own, and being wholly self-identified with, such acts of will as themselves are in perfect accordance with, and are therefore the true experience and development of, the nature which is essentially and properly his own."

It is not a question of uninfluenced choice. There cannot be a perfectly equal choice between two acts or words or thoughts. Heredity and environment affect each choice. But, and this is the vital point, they affect each choice distributively. The career of a man as a whole choice, collectively speaking, they do not determine. It is a question of the whole-career-possibility.

Now when applied directly this whole-career-possibility is seen to be the possibility which every man possesses of doing that which is right. The man who is the servant of sin is no longer free. On the other hand, the man who could do no evil would not be free. But he who can work out his own salvation, and respond to the responsibilities which are placed upon him, and can realize his sonship—he who can do this is free. "Self-identification" means the eternal ability to come to one's own and not to be compelled by an

outside force to do that which is not in accordance with one's deepest desires or needs.

In a short volume of this kind this subject can be dealt with only vaguely, and the student is urged to complete what has so shortly been said here by reading "Atonement and Personality," by R. C. Moberly, pages 220-227, First Edition.

### AGNOSTICISM.

Before leaving this division of our subject, which might be called the destructive division, we must attend to the matter of Agnosticism. In concluding our examination of the philosophic basis of Naturalism we came to this point: having exposed the fallacy of any endeavor to think about "Universals" or "Wholes" from the point of view of empiricism, it was then suggested that the Naturalist might reply that this was so, but that he for his part denied to every one the right to speculate beyond the pale of experience. In a word the Naturalist would in this case allow generalization to be carried to a certain point, but no further. He would allow the creation of a natural cosmos, but declare that the elements which are necessary to make it a perfect cosmos—as would be necessary to make a perfect translation of "Faust," for example—that into these atmospheric and undefinable elements we have no right to pry. Such a position as this we affirmed to be a departure from his original hypothesis—which in fact he would be willing to grant. Such a reply from the Naturalist is

the commencement of Agnosticism, and to Agnosticism we must now turn our attention.

We are glad to do this for two reasons: the first, to complete the argument in the midst of which we paused, by reason of the entrance of a new element; and the second, to free ourselves from a possible accusation of ourselves being agnostic. This second point is most important, since in our attack upon the value of scientific laws we laid ourselves open to a serious charge. If, for example, the testimony of the senses is as unreliable as we stated, then have we not committed ourselves to a position quite at variance with any claims to final knowledge?

In what follows we shall deal with these two points. We shall endeavor to show how that the argument of the Agnostic against prying into the secrets of life is humanly untenable; and secondly, how that our position is what might be called that of Christian Agnosticism.

Agnosticism is the theory which attacks the value of a conclusion upon the grounds that the premises are insufficient. Now, as has been indicated, this is exactly what has been done in assailing all attempts to generalize upon particular premises. If we make uncertain and precarious all products of the mind's acquisition; if we discount the value of all sense perception—as we do when we refer to the habitual unreliability of the senses—when we do this we necessarily discount the worth of every product of human thought. If one says, for example, that the eyes and the ears are so fallible that experiments made

under their observations are never to be trusted, he naturally undermines thereby the whole validity of the thought process—he becomes either a skeptic or an Agnostic. We have then, therefore, laid ourselves open to the charge of Agnosticism. Let us be perfectly frank and confess that we are agnostic to this extent, and that the religious interpretation of the world implies as much; but let us proceed further to examine the Agnostic's theory, for it will be seen that there is another and more important manner in which we allowed the limitations of human thought.<sup>4</sup>

It would be well for us to state at large the elements of this very live and most popular of all modern theories. The vast accumulations of knowledge, which have come to men in the past hundred years, have come so rapidly as to result in intellectual dyspepsia. Overcrowd the mind and you get the same result that comes when you overcrowd the stomach. Agnosticism is a form of intellectual bewilderment. The name itself, given by Huxley, signifies the opposite of Gnosticism. Now Gnosticism is that form of thought which ventures without fear or shame to write down and to formulate the whole geography and economy of an imagined heavenly kingdom. Gnosticism is unhesitating belief in the ability of the human mind to comprehend, through various processes, the problem of life, and completely to understand the universe.

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<sup>4</sup> Between Skepticism and Agnosticism the difference is a question of degree rather than of kind. Skepticism allows no generalizations, Agnosticism only a few.

The Gnostic imagines that for him there is no secret, since he can unravel all; that no longer need men "see through a glass darkly."

As opposed to this pretence to see "face to face," to know all, the Agnostic says that we cannot see through the glass at all. He affirms that we cannot, as the Christian would have it, see through the glass even darkly. It is opaque. Beyond the things which appear and which are cognizable by the senses we can know nothing. The Agnostic is, in a word, naturalistic in his theory. He is not content, however, to repudiate the possibility of seeing through the glass, but he commences, and here he gets himself into trouble, to philosophize about the things which are on his side of that opaque substance. He carries us through a consideration of the ultimates. We are shown, with a logic which is irresistible, that such concepts as matter and motion, and time and space, are severally of themselves unthinkable. We are shown how "time" as such cannot be conceived, and likewise "space," and likewise all of the ultimate concepts of thought.

This being so, and the limits of speculative thought thus involving us in contradictions or inconceivabilities, the Agnostic proceeds to conclude that any belief in anything which is final, such as either the universe of Naturalism or the God of Idealism, is foolish. If, he argues, we cannot think without confusion about such a simple thing as "time," what right have we to speculate about such larger things as are posited by the Materialist or the theologian? Theology and sys-



tematized infidelity are equally abominations! For example, in criticising the theologian's procedure, the Agnostic reminds us of the unthinkableableness of a Timeless Being coming into time relations—the Incarnation or the Creation; or again we are reminded that an Infinite Will cannot *per se* yield to the conditions which are involved in the conception of a free humanity; or again we are told of the absurdity of One who knows no beginning ever beginning anything—creating a world, for example. These and similar logical *culs de sac* are we reminded of, and in the face of them we are bidden to surrender, to yield to the limits of human understanding, and to admit the complete relativity of thought; we are advised to surrender to the necessity of the case, and to rest content in thinking only about such things as we can surround with our minds and comprehend.

With equal vigor the Agnostic attacks the position of the Naturalist, as, according to his theory, all definitions of universals are unthinkable. The great Jew, Spinoza, with his aphorism *definitio negatio est* (to define is to negate), summed up the argument admirably. We must admit that logically we do limit when we define, and that therefore the unlimited is not patent to definition, and therefore that universals, as unlimited concepts, cannot be defined. Hence all reachings out beyond individual concepts are doomed to failure. As the logician would put it, we can deal with distributives, but collectives are as such beyond the range of human comprehension. Such is the Agnostic position. An utter surrender it is to the rela-

tivity of thought; a complete capitulation to the conditions in which we are set; a supine admission that the human mind is not competent to deal with any final or ultimate concept; that is to say, if there are any secrets in the universe, we at least have no right to pry into them.<sup>5</sup>

What is to be said to this theory? It should be approached from two different points of view. First as philosophers we must admit the cogency of its premises; we must admit that to define is to negate, and that by the ingenuity of logic it is possible to show that the simplest of such basic ideas as time and space involve us in hopeless contradictions. Just as we are not afraid to range ourselves with the Pragmatists, and to travel part of the journey with them, so we need not fear to keep company part of the way with the Agnostics. We are glad to allow that, so far as *mental processes* are concerned, it is impossible to get a clear understanding of final things. We admit without hesitation the contradiction which can be conjured up in the idea of a Timeless One revealing Himself in time; we admit that the very idea of an Incarnation, or of a purposeful God—who has everything and hence should need to make nothing—we admit that so far as thought processes are concerned, these things are self-contradictory. We grant that the essence of Theism involves us in innumerable impossibilities of thought. As philosophers we must admit,

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Herbert Spencer's "First Principles," and Huxley *in loco*.

then, the trenchancy of the Agnostic position, but we do not stop there.

As philosophers, not of the old school, but of the new, we assert that *thought processes* are in themselves insufficient; that the very demonstration of the incompetency of thought processes does in itself demonstrate that they are insufficient for the formation of a theory or for the diagnosis of the world-problem. Agnosticism is in itself the supremest of contradictions, since if we cannot know that we know, how can we know that we do not know? This is by all the more recent students of the problem admitted to be the fundamental fallacy in the Agnostic position. It is an illustration of the danger of trusting in thought processes. Whoever confides in logic must, as Spencer himself has shown, end in contradiction.

We must go behind these activities of the mind, and free ourselves from the inertia into which the relativity of thought throws us; we must do this and realize that if *thought processes* are insufficient, then into our philosophy must be brought *life processes*. Either bring life into philosophy, or give up everything and cease to think! That is what we must do if mind is not in the last resort an *ignis fatuus*. So then in dealing with this popular, but little understood theory; this theory to which the man of the street glibly proclaims his adherence without knowing what it means or what it implies, we begin and end by demanding the right to emerge from the regions of inductive and deductive logic, and to strike out into the daylight of life. We assert that to remain in the mazes of thought

is futile and suicidal, and that a theory of life which does not bring into its conclusions the big, broad facts of ordinary existence is an unworthy theory. We demand that before the conclusion of the world-problem can be valid, there must be incorporated in the premises some elements of human experience.

In other words, we flatly refuse to debate with the Agnostic upon his own grounds. He desires us to accept his plausible premises, and we are tempted to, since so long as they remain within the skull they are true. But the trouble is that there is something outside of our heads, and that our "right hands have terrible things to teach us." The Agnostic's premises are true so far as they go, but they are not the whole truth, and we cannot enter into a debate until the whole truth be brought into the evidence. But this the Agnostic will not do, since his conclusions depend upon limiting the premises to the confines of speculative thought. Therefore we must be frank and confess that we will not argue with those who deny all validity to universals, and who repudiate the worth of thoughts upon the finalities of life. The breach between the Agnostic and the Idealist, then, is not one so much of conclusions as of premise, and until agreement in regard to the premise is reached debate must be futile.

It is not a question, as some would have us believe, of a choice between delirious Gnosticism and atrophied Agnosticism. Imagining that the matter is narrowed to these limits causes most of the difficulty. If men suppose that they are forced to accept either a

know-*all* or a know-*nothing* attitude towards life, then it were perhaps best to be agnostic. But no such dilemma confronts us. The middle ground is open for occupation, the know-*something* ground, and thus relying upon our ability to see darkly through the glass we escape the horns of an ugly dilemma.

This, then, is how we deal with the Agnostic. We say to the man who endeavors to confine us to the limit of thought processes, and therefore to deny us all right to pry into that part of the universe which is not subject to the tests of the laboratory or the clinic, to such we say: to do this is to destroy the best part of the evidence; to exclude from the premises things which are germane. Therefore we cannot allow your objection.

But it has now become evident that we must give some good reason for this claim that the excluded bits of evidence are valuable. We must substantiate this position. But it is to be done naturally under the constructive part of our essay, and must therefore be put off until we undertake such a substantiation in our examination of the value of Idealism.

## CHAPTER III.

### PHASES OF NATURALISM.

WE have considered in the two preceding chapters the elements of Naturalism, commencing for the purpose of clarification with the statement that in the regions of discursive or philosophic thought there are two possible attitudes which may be adopted, the idealistic or the naturalistic. We endeavored to make plain the fact that in considering the world-problem one has either to show that there *is* a meaning which underlies phenomena, or that there *is not*. The only effort which is made to escape from this dilemma is that of the Pantheist, but as will be indicated later on, the Pantheist is at bottom either materialistic or idealistic. The great schools of thought led by Spinoza on the one hand and Hegel on the other when reduced to their lowest terms reveal their affinity to one of these two basic attitudes.

When, then, one discusses the religious problem it is necessary to begin at the beginning and find out whether he stands on land or water; to find out which of these positions he takes for his own. Until the rock-bottom of the foundation is found it is useless to discuss any of the details of the superstructure—aye, even any of the details of the foundation itself. Foundations rest upon a foundation, and it is this ultimate of which we are in search. In contemporary religious discussions the prime factor in creating con-

fusion is failure to start from the beginning. Theorists and theologians, skeptics and neologians, unbelievers and half-believers, do more often than they dream build theories and take positions without ever having considered on which foundation stone their position rests. Estimable individuals start new schools of thought, and come to astonishing results, simply because they have never found out whether as a first premise they allow the possibility of there being a meaning behind phenomena or not. In a word, the first thing a man must do in discussing the religious question is to find out whether his position is idealistic or naturalistic.

Now the importance of this assertion can only be realized after one has examined into the types of new theology (so called) which are in vogue to-day. If it be found, for example, that a new theory is fundamentally naturalistic—that its first premise is anti-idealistic—then we can at once know that the thing to be discussed is not the conclusion but the first premise. And we can further know—if we have followed the discussion closely and understand how Naturalism and Idealism are mutually exclusive, and that anything which starts from the naturalistic basis thereby excludes itself from any participation in religion—we can further know that if a new religion be naturalistic then as a matter of fact it can be no religion at all.

What we wish to make plain here is that certain popular theories, which receive wide acceptance as theologies, and which delight a large number of

men and women who dream that in them they have found a creed which they can accept without stultifying themselves—what we wish to make plain from our exposition of the mutual exclusiveness of the poles of thought, is that most of these new and popular religions are not religions at all, or at least that they only possess the right to indulge in religious terminology and thought when they forget or violate the first premise upon which their systems are built.

There are so many examples of this modern form of speculation, that one need not designate any particular instance. They are all built upon the same hypothesis, and all issue from the same psychological atmosphere.<sup>1</sup> Their principal tenet is that the decrees of Naturalism must be listened to—that anything

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<sup>1</sup>If one desires for clearness a thoroughgoing statement of the fundamental principles which are characteristic of new religions, he cannot do better, perhaps, than consult an article by the Rev. Chas. Voysey, published in "The Religious Systems of the World," by Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., 1902. There we find it stated "that all knowledge of God whatever must be based on natural facts—on certain indisputable facts in the outer and physical phenomena of Nature, and on certain indisputable facts in the nature and faculties of man; on these latter as the interpreters of the former. Under this Canon, the corollary is drawn, that no belief of Theism can be at variance with the exact and demonstrated conclusions of science." Now this so-called Canon represents the premise which dominates this mode of thought. Since Francis Newman in 1858 gave impetus to it, down until the present day, no matter how much details may have varied, this rule, that everything must be measured by its approximation to the demonstrations of science, has been the great point with new theologians.



which comes between a man and the pronouncements of the empirical scientist must be cast aside at whatever cost!

To this theory many excellent people give allegiance. Their ecclesiastical regularity is to be discovered, not in their objections to the form of the Church's organization but in the matter of its creed. They are loyal in their support of Christian work, but openly announce that they can no longer hold those elements of the Apostles' Creed which collide with the dogmas and decrees of the laboratory. In a word they seek to remain Christians in name and Naturalists in theory.

Now it is most desirable in these days to expose the impossibility of this position, and to point out that they who pursue such a course, and who yield to the persuasiveness of this or that innovator, have in the last resort to be faulted for inconsistency.

It is a simple matter to say that the modern man can accept no miracles, and to reject the "supernatural" element in the Gospel story is to place one's self in a thoroughly comfortable position, worldly speaking. To discourse upon the difference between the historical and the supernatural or apocalyptic Jesus is a delightful pastime, but—and here is what it is necessary to dwell upon—whenever one thus creates a choice between miraculous and non-miraculous, between historical (as meaning revealed to the eye) and apocalyptic (as meaning revealed to the spirit)—whenever one creates with the modern innovator such a dilemma as this, and then proceeds to affirm that it is

perfectly reasonable to be abundantly religious and choose the natural, non-miraculous and so-called historical horn; whenever one does this he is guilty of the error of contradiction. This is so because, if there be nothing which is not natural—i. e., which is different from that which we experience with our senses—and if there cannot be allowed the possibility of the miraculous—i. e., of that which has never yet been sensually experienced—and finally, if there be nothing below history in its modern sense—i. e., as a record of facts and figures—if we make such as these our premises, then it is idle for anyone to discuss the kind of religion which he prefers.

If one reasons after this manner then no religion can be his, since *religion arises out of the idealistic interpretation of life*, and it implies without qualification, first, that the natural is not all, since it as such has no meaning or mystery. The natural is the self-evident, according to the Naturalist; and if it possessed any inherent meaning, if it were more than on the surface it appeared to be, then it would be mysterious—and there is no distinction between the mysterious and the supernatural. “Supernatural” simply means the *presence in the natural of an element of meaning*; of something which cannot be apprehended with the organs of sense. This is the first implication of Idealism: that there is that in the universe which has meaning; that beyond the facts of sense experience there are facts of larger value.

And then in the second place Idealism implies that

the miraculous is not to be condemned *a priori* as impossible. Idealism means that we do not know with our five senses *all* that is to be known. Now if there may be more than our senses apprehend, then it follows that for all we know the miraculous may be possible. Idealism commits us to allowing the possibility of there being something beyond the range of sense experience, and therefore it commits itself to allowing the *a priori* possibility of the miraculous.

Finally, Idealism implies the apocalyptic rather than the scientific side of history. It commits us to the position that beyond facts and figures there are world movements, personalities and purposes. It commits us to the belief that in the making of mankind there is more to be considered than mechanism. It clearly implies that the real value in history lies in the intangible, atmospheric and indescribable, rather than in the tangible and describable. Idealism sees movements and developments, it sees purposes in process of fulfillment; it sees ideals in process of realization. There is no point to Idealism if its first emphasis be not upon this mysterious element in history. Now Naturalism rejects this side of the question and talks about an imperative choice, for example, between the historical and apocalyptic Jesus. And yet it goes on to treat, or at least religious Naturalism so-called, goes on to treat Jesus as if the apocalyptic were an element to be attended to. For example, people of the type under discussion would begin by upholding what is called "scientific history."

When they do this they exclude all the elements of purpose and personality, and then they abruptly turn about and discourse upon the purpose and personality of Jesus.

We have thus at some length endeavored to expose what we believe to be the error of those who endeavor to mix the water of Naturalism with the oil of the spirit—the error being in not perceiving before they set out that the conclusions which they desire to reach cannot be reached so long as one begins by prohibiting the possibility of any elements which are not demonstrable in sense experience.

Less careful and less scientific than the foregoing type of false religion is that of the modern individual who tries to invent a new religion which shall contain such elements of Christianity as shall not collide with the law of the laboratory. Such is the new religionist proper; the person who makes his creed measure up to his text-book on chemistry. Once again it is to be insisted that whoever asserts: "If this or that is not materially demonstrable, then I will cast it out of my creed"; whoever asserts this, takes his stand upon the naturalistic basis; and whoever does this, does completely in his first premise exclude the whole of the religious hypothesis.

There is no halting ground between these extremes. One may be very religious or only semi-religious; one may be disturbed by innumerable doubts, but in the end, if he is to be religious at all, his position must be idealistic. It is a logical impossibility to be naturalistic and

have any sympathetic dealings with religion. It is logically impossible to assert, on the one hand, that empirical demonstration is the court of last resort, and on the other, that one is interested in Christianity. And yet this is exactly what is done by many in these days, and it is all because they fail to realize that entire reliance upon the demonstrations of science is identical with the assertion that behind the phenomena with which science deals there is no meaning. Whoever, therefore, would dilute orthodoxy, must be very careful, in the first place, if he would remain Christian, to see to it that the reasons given for this dilution be not the reasons of the Naturalist.

Whenever, then, one is approached by any of these modern reformers, before entering into details, it is always necessary to go to rock-bottom. It is useless to discuss with a new religionist any of the elements of his belief until one finds out whether in the last resort he is a Naturalist or not. And then if he is a Naturalist all discussion is in vain, since his use of the word religion is of courtesy only. He is an æsthe-<sup>2</sup>te, which is the modern way of saying that he is a pagan,<sup>2</sup> and that his position is in the last resort utterly opposed to the very possibility of religion, aye, of human freedom. To the apostle, then, or to the disciple of the new religion we say, "Either give up your phraseology or else give up your Naturalism."

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<sup>2</sup> See the discussion of relation between Paganism and Æstheticism in the chapter on Pantheism.

Such we would affirm to be the way in which we must deal with the numerous qualifiers of the faith, and with all who reject for reasons sufficient to themselves the creed of their fathers. If, on the other hand, they honestly admit the validity of the idealistic position, then the method of dealing with them is quite different; it is a question of interpretation.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SUFFICIENCY OF IDEALISM.

**I**T has been pointed out that when one begins to philosophize, that is to say when one begins to weigh seriously the problems of life, he must become either a Naturalist or an Idealist. Now, inasmuch as Naturalism by its hypothesis denies the reasonableness of any religion; and inasmuch as our object is to test the value of religion; therefore, lest we lose time in seeking that which from the outset may be unreasonable and valueless, we have had to commence by investigating this theory which would invalidate, if true, that which we are about to discuss. In a word, before we could proceed further we have had to decide whether Naturalism is a satisfactory solution to the world-problem, for if it is, then all further discussion is useless.

As a result of our study it appears that there are certain philosophical and scientific and practical facts which compel us to question the validity of this anti-religious theory. We have found, if we may put it even more forcibly, that Naturalism does not fulfill its promise; that despite its plausible simplicity it does none the less involve those who hold to it in a number of obscure incongruities and philosophical impossibilities. We have therefore dismissed it in the hope that that theory which is its antithesis may be found more acceptable—or at least that it may be

found less impossible and less baffling. For, and the plainer we make this truth the better, "man cannot by searching" find the complete answer to the riddle of the Universe; and the further we speculate the more clearly do we realize the hopelessness of any attempt to write down in black and white the whole of the cosmic meaning. This being so, it follows that we are to search, not for a perfect solution to our problem, but for the best which can be found—for that which will most nearly approximate to the needs of thinking humanity. Therefore let us turn to Idealism in order to see whether it provides us with a theory which is more acceptable and less impossible than is Naturalism.

It will not be possible for us to pursue our investigation of Idealism in the same manner as that in which we investigated its antithesis, for the obvious reason that philosophy cannot be allowed to bear testimony on its own behalf.

Philosophy being the search for the meaning of life is no more than the intellectual expression of Idealism. Idealism may be said to find three forms of expression: *Æsthetics*, or the speech of the emotions and senses, under which is studied all that pertains to the "beautiful;" *Ethics*, or the speech of the will, under which is studied all that pertains to the "good;" *Philosophy proper*, or the speech of the intellect, under which is studied all that pertains to the "true." *Philosophy*, therefore, presupposes the possibility of the reasonableness of Idealism—of the reasonableness of the theory that life possesses meaning—and as such it



is not competent to argue on behalf of that which it presupposes, lest it be convicted of arguing in a circle. When, then, one seeks for points of view from which to approach this subject he finds but two, the practical and the scientific, and these two are so nearly akin that it is only for paragraphic purposes that we distinguish between them. Let us begin by examining into the practical value of Idealism.

As a matter of fact there is no larger argument for the reasonableness of the contention that there is more in man's life than matter and motion bound together in a contentless sequence, than the fact that it is practically imperative for us to act as if it were so. It may be well enough to show inconsistencies in this or that theory; it may be well enough to expound, as has been done by keen logicians, that this or that theory involves one in inconceivabilities; but no matter how inconceivable and inconsistent it may be shown to be, if we are to live and move and have any kind of being, we must peremptorily proceed from moment to moment, and from day to day, upon the hypothesis that the chief importance of those things which come to us through the senses is to be found in their meaning.

It is simply beyond belief that the world of men would be what it now is; that humanity would be lusty and happy and hopeful and ambitious and deep of purpose; it is unbelievable that men could have risen to the heights whereon they now stand, had they not assumed that there was more in life than a meaningless succession of insignificant sensations. If a Mill

had persuaded the world centuries ago that matter was no more than a "permanent possibility of sensation," it is unquestionable as a fact of psychological sociology that society would not have become what it now is. And further, it is to be asserted, upon the same basis, that the victorious career of humanity cannot continue, unless men in the future act as they have in the past upon the basis of Idealism.

Let us illustrate this question as clearly as we may from certain aspects of life. The world is for man a place of poetry and tragedy and comedy and duty. It is not permitted for any to dispense with the paraphernalia of the stage. We cannot so much as live unless we accept the conditions imposed upon us. In proportion as we renounce our desires to be independent of the scenic devices, will be our prosperity. By which we mean to say, that men cannot prosper unless they accept the presence of, and the importance of, the poetical and the tragic and the comic and the ethical elements of life. For example: from day to day we find ourselves confronted by situations: at this moment all is comedy, at that all is tragedy; at one turn of the road we are aroused, unexpectedly, to poetical considerations; at another the voice of duty suddenly breaks in upon our ears. Now what do these situations imply? That is one of the vital questions in life. Why is it that comedy bursts in upon our lives, and why do men laugh? Or why again do we find tragedy darkening the door? What is tragedy? Or, again, why do we yield to emotions which we call poetical, and what is poetry? Or why does duty drive

us, like reluctant children, from the paths of caprice and self-will? What are these elements which make up so large a part of our lives? <sup>1</sup>

After all, poetry and duty, comedy and tragedy, are terms adopted by men for the purpose of describing some of the meanings which life and experience are constantly creating. A thing to be comic must have extraordinary relations to its environment, and the very unusualness of these relations it is, which bear testimony to the significance of those usual or ordinary relations, which might have been overlooked because of their usualness. Again, tragedy is but another way of describing a significant warp in the beam of life; the word tragedy is an endeavor to express the peculiarity of a situation the painfulness of which is in proportion to its profound significance. Poetry again is an expression of what one conceives to be the meaning of this or that object; while duty, what is it, but the summoning of men to make their actions accord with the meaning of life; to live so as to imply what life implies?

Let us put it in another way. Suppose we did not recognize these elements of the day's work; suppose there were not given to us any perception or appreciation of comedy or tragedy, and that we were blind to the poetical, and could not hear the voice of duty. Is it not evident that if we disregarded these environ-

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<sup>1</sup> A most interesting discussion of these questions is to be found in C. C. Everett's book entitled "Poetry, Comedy and Duty."

ing facts of life we should fail to rise to our full potentialities? Is it not evident that it is only in proportion as we appreciate and associate with these waves of feeling and volition that we rise to the heights of manhood? For what is life to man but the "having" of an experience, while for beasts it is but the mere "being" of an experience? "To be" an experience means to pass through the eventualities of life without even becoming conscious of their differences, or of their several peculiarities; to walk down the road of life without so much as noticing the flowers which border the way; to look with Wordsworth's Peter Bell on the primrose and see nothing but the primrose.

To *be* an experience is to be blind and deaf to all of the colors and sounds and light and shadows and harmonies and perspectives of the world. To *be* an experience means to fail to see in life tragedy or comedy or poetry or duty. On the other hand, to *have* an experience means to perceive all of these things, and upon perceiving, to study them; and studying, to understand them; and understanding them to get a grasp on life; a grasp such as will open up to us its glorious possibilities; a grasp such as will enable us, as all experience does testify, to rise to the height of manhood, and to dominate the world.

Such is the practical argument for the idealistic position, and such is philosophy's apology for its own existence. It all amounts to an assertion that one cannot be a real man unless he takes the world as if it were drenched with meaning. It is to assert that in

proportion to our acceptance of the fact that phenomena have meaning, is our chance of becoming their master. The world of matter will master us, if we treat it as if it had no significance; but if we see in each atom a suggestion, if with the melancholy Jaques we find tongues in trees and books in running brooks and sermons in stones, then will the trees and the brooks and the stones become our slaves and the whole world will yield to us the mastery. If you would then be a man and a conqueror, be an Idealist!

More than this, it will be found that all who have ever succeeded in life have consciously or unconsciously been idealists, of one type or another. No man has ever prospered unless he has treated his career as a "whole," and thus to treat anything is to act upon idealistic principles. All who have ever scaled the heights have treated their careers as a whole, and have gained their measures of success in proportion as they have given attention to the various moments of their lives, not as isolated items, but as related parts. It is because they have never forgotten to relate one experience to the rest of their lives; because no one moment was ever treated as if it were of itself an end; because they have in moments of triumph or disaster ever remembered that the triumph or the disaster was but one part of a larger whole, that they have won the battle of life. The successful statesman, or soldier, or thinker, or inventor, all such have occupied themselves in relating one experience to another, and in attending to each only as to a part which belonged in reality to a larger whole.

Now this process, which we call in common parlance, planning or organizing, and which is so essentially typical of the man of mark; this studying of the elements which make up one's life, is all done because of the belief that life has a meaning. If life were no more than a sequence of events with no hidden thread of significance, and no unifying principle running through it all; if one considered life as an indeterminate sequence of unrelated events, then to be sure one could be a Naturalist. But the moment we conceive of our lives as wholes, and relate one part or incident in them to another, and seek to bind them all together in a larger unity; the moment we *treat* our experience at all—instead of *being* experiences—in that moment do we become philosophers and idealists. It is therefore making no assumption, but merely the stating of a psychological fact, when we affirm that the conquest of the temporal presupposes Idealism. It always has been so, and accumulating experience compels us to believe that it always will be so. Though we need not walk with our heads in the clouds, though we need not lose our way through gazing at the mountain top, yet we must, if we are to advance, lift up our eyes unto the hills in order to value the presence of the lights and shadows.

When we turn to our next subject, the examination of Idealism from the point of view of science, we find a corroboration of all that has been said. In fact we shall have illustrated most clearly the practical necessity of Idealism when we have studied the methods of

science, since it will be seen that it is preëminently idealistic; or rather that it depends for all of its victories upon that very activity which accounts for the existence of Idealism—the imagination.

In order to investigate this question let us begin with the question: What is the organ of Idealism? What creates ideals? How do they arise? To what do we owe the existence of the innumerable ideas with which the world abounds? And it is evident that it is to the imagination that we owe the existence of ideas and ideals. It is the faculty which brings into our lives conceptions and thoughts and theories; it is the originator and creator of everything which does not owe its origin to the senses. For example, I think of a city which I have visited; that is an object of thought which my senses have brought into existence. Then I think of a perfect city, a city free from graft and filth and crime; a city where all is joy and peace; this is an object of thought which my imagination has brought into existence.

There are then these two ways of creating thoughts: through the activity of the senses and through the activity of the imagination. It is not our business here to discuss the psychology of the imagination, but it is necessary that we make clear these two truths: First, that Idealism is the product of the imaginative faculty; secondly, that to this same faculty is science indebted for a large part of its success.<sup>2</sup> When we

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<sup>2</sup> We shall discuss later on the obvious retort that there is a valid and an invalid way in which to make use of the imagination, and that science alone uses the valid way.

have said this much it should be evident what is implied when we affirm that science is the product of Idealism. We mean that it is the product of that faculty which lies at the basis thereof, and we mean that everything which is produced with the help of the imagination is to some extent idealistic. Let us make this clear.

Whenever one pauses to take a reckoning he discovers that what we are now able to term scientific hypotheses were in the beginning but imaginative theories, but the fancies of olden times which have in experience proven themselves to be true—to be more than the fancies which they were in the beginning. For example: What was the theory of the rotundity of the earth in the youth of the great Columbus? Was it not a dream, a creation of man's ever fertile imagination? Columbus dreamed a dream, and he had the courage to believe that what his imaginative faculty presented to his mind was as true as were the things which were presented to it by his sense of sight or feeling. He trusted to his imagination in that instance just as he trusted in other instances his eyesight. And so that fact of modern science which we called the rotundity of the earth was in the commencement no more than a fancy.

Or again, Darwin imagined some years ago that by a process of selection the animal kingdom gradually improved certain of its species until it evolved that triumph which we call mankind. This theory of the origin of species which is called "Evolution" is likewise entirely a creation of the imaginative faculty—it is



a fancy! It is an idea! So far as its origin, its psychological origin, is concerned it is as much an idea as was Plato's Republic, or Dante's Hell. For the long, long development of species is something which *a priori* is beyond the range of sense experience. No one can or could see or hear the advance which has been made by the animal kingdom. The theory of evolution is called to this day by its adherents an "hypothesis," and that means an idea. It is therefore the product of that same faculty which makes Idealism. It is in a measure a form of Idealism. Darwin and Dante were brother idealists.

But at once this coupling together of the names of the great biologist and the great poet provokes an objection, and we are emphatically reminded that there is a great gulf between the imaginative creations of these two masters; that one gave us fact and the other fancy; that one told us of what was real, while the other sang to us of what was unreal.<sup>3</sup> We are, in a

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<sup>3</sup> Rather than allow ourselves to be plunged into that most abysmic of all philosophical discussions as to the meanings and natures of "Reality," and "Experience," we shall say briefly in the first place that, as what is to follow will show, by "Real" we mean that which proves its reality in experience; and in the second place, that by "Experience" we mean the summing up of the past. Now it is to be noted that such a definition as this of experience is objected to most strenuously by the followers of William James—the Pragmatists. According to James it is not possible for experience to be such a summing up of the past as is implied in our definition. For him experience is a state of flux. It is, as he puts it, "experience *ing*"; that is to say, its face is to the future.

word, reminded that it is necessary to distinguish between the activities in which we acquire information, and in our gatherings of data to exclude from the testimony all such activities as result in the creation of hippogriffs and hells. This is an objection which we are glad to welcome, since it not only coincides with the opinion of the thoughtful Idealist, but also because it will enable us later on to illustrate a point of no small importance. But for the

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He would have it that the moment one endeavors to recapitulate the past without regard to the future he ceases to experience. Recapitulation is to James something quite different from experiencing. The one deals with the past as past, the other with the past only as it juts out into the future, and the experiencer stands at the point of jutting out with his face to the future. To this it is to be replied that while one admits that experience is a state of flux and not of momentary recapitulations, yet as a matter of fact unless one did pause and draw lines and recapitulate he could not know experience at all. The possibility of concrete thought—of experiencing—depends upon reckoning up the past at a given moment. A noun, for example, is a product of experience and it is the product of an act of recapitulation without reference to the future. In the same way we add up a sum and say that two and two equal four, and while we are willing to admit that the four may be added to, still if we are to be conscious beings we must say that at the moment when we added, each of the twos equaled two and at that time made four. Practical necessity rules here and not theoretical philosophy (as the practical Pragmatist would have it), and we can and must define experience for thinking purposes as a summing up of the past. The element of futurity without doubt is ever present, but the necessities of life compel us to disregard it, when we speak or think.

moment we are concerned merely with a question of method; we wish to make perfectly evident that so far as psychological processes are concerned, there is no difference between the method of the poet and that of the scientist; that science advances by making use of the organ of Idealism—if we may thus speak of the imagination.

We are now in a position to understand the force and the point of what is called the "Ontological argument." For many centuries there have been a number of "stock" arguments which have been used by the exponents of natural theology. In almost every old book upon "Evidences" or Natural Religion will be found the so-called Cosmological and Teleological and Ontological and Moral arguments; often indeed they have been rashly called "proofs." Now in this present volume we have adopted a method which will not allow us to make such use of them as has been customary in the past. It is not that we have outgrown them, or that we are one bit wiser than were our philosophical forefathers; it is merely a question of point of view; we think and we look at things differently from what they did. We shall, however, be careful to point out in the proper connection the essence of each of these arguments, and in the present connection, while we are discussing the imagination, we can with propriety take up the Ontological argument in order to make plain its essence and significance.

The value of the "arguments" is not generally appreciated. It is fashionable to smile indulgently upon them in these days, just as we smile indulgently on the old rabbinical, or the less old and much more acute scholastic method of argumentation. But to do this is a great mistake, for it cannot be too confidently asserted that we have not outgrown, and never shall outgrow these forms of thought. The fact of the matter is, that they should be called *forms of thought*, rather than arguments.

It is exactly as if one lived in a house with but four windows through which he could look out upon the world. All that could ever be known or learned about the world and the universe in the midst of which the house was set, must needs come through information which is to be acquired as one gazes out of one of these windows. Even so, each one of us lives in the house from which he can look out upon the world in no way, except through one of four forms of thought, and these are they of which we have been speaking; They are the categories, as it were, of synthetic reasoning; the methods in which one must think, if he cares to think at all, upon the world-problem. No man can escape this. Every philosopher that has ever written, though he may have been most careful to avoid these terms, has made use of one of these methods. Hegel, for example, used the ontological method; and Schleiermacher the cosmological; and a whole host of thinkers, from Aristotle down, have been teleologists.

As has been said, it will be indicated in this book exactly what the essence of these arguments are at such points as are best fitted to bring out their significance; at this moment we are in a position from which we can best explain the Ontological argument.

St. Anselm, though not the originator, since as we have pointed out these arguments are all old as synthetic thought, developed to its perfection this process of thought which is called ontological (i. e., the speech of being). He was a believer in the unlimited validity under certain conditions of the feats of the imagination. He taught that anything which the imagination created must, if in its essence it contained the idea of existence, actually exist. For example, he said that his mind conceived of something "than which nothing could be greater"—this he affirmed to be God, and a sufficient proof of God's existence. That which persuaded him of the finality of the argument was this. He said: "I conceive of something than which nothing can be greater. Now unless this something exists, there would be something greater than it. Therefore it must exist."

Such bold logic has of course its charms, but we can realize now that for practical purposes it is valueless. What the great old thinker actually reached by this method of procedure was the *idea* of "something than which nothing can be greater." He acquired an infinite idea, but no more. He could prove by logic that his idea existed, but beyond that nothing.

Now in the argument in which we have just indulged it will be seen that we began exactly as did Anselm. We began with the imagination. Where the modern thinker, however, deserts the old-time Saint is in the method by which he proves his conclusions. St. Anselm left it to be done by questionable logic. The modern thinker, on the other hand, obtains his idea of something than which nothing can be greater—of God—and then leaves that idea to human experience for authentication. A product of the imagination can never by any feat of logic or rhetoric become more than an idea. The regularity of the sun or the certainty of gravity were only ideas in the beginning but they put on reality—became incarnate, we might say—when human experience discovered that they corresponded to actualities of existence. So much for the so-called Ontological argument.

It is now necessary to return to that objection with which we broke in upon the discussion of the part played by the imagination in science. As was then stated, an objection to the unlimited use of and confidence in the imaginative faculty—an objection to the carrying of it to such extremes as result in the creation of hippogriffs and hells—is of help rather than hindrance to the thoughtful Idealist, since it enables him more clearly and pertinently to define and illustrate just what is to be considered as a valid and scientific use of this idea-creating faculty.

We are reminded, then, that when Columbus

dreamed his dream the world scoffed at him; and that his vision was scientifically valueless until he had crossed the ocean — *or* rather until other seamen had rounded the Horn and came back to Europe from the Orient. When we are thus reminded of the time and experience which have been required before the dream of the rotundity of the world became an accepted fact, we have at once to listen to the assertion that no product of the imagination possesses value until it has been empirically proven to be true to fact.

Now what is to be said to this condition put upon us by the scientists? How is the Idealist to take this limitation to the validity of the imagination? And without hesitation it is to be answered that we accept this condition most gladly; that it is to be welcomed; it is to be agreed to by the Idealist; he is more than ready to abide by it explicitly. At all times the sober Idealist is willing to allow that feats of the imaginative faculty must be checked up and authenticated by experience. If we did not do so, then there would be no difference between a horse and a hippogriff, and Puck would be as real a creature as Palestrina. If we did not submit to experience the things created by our fancies then indeed would our world be peopled with perplexing prodigies! Sea-serpents would be among the least disconcerting of its inhabitants!

For certain, then, we allow that all products of the imagination be regarded with suspicion until experience has demonstrated their reality. But—and here is the vital point over which disagreement arises—what is the criterion of experience? What is a valid ex-

perience, and what and who are acceptable witnesses? It is no longer a question of Idealism or Naturalism, but of what is to be regarded as the standard form of experience. For explanation, we will be told that it is unobjectionable to conjure up an hypothesis as to the descent of man; to have a vision of the primeval and pre-historic and primitive people; to do this we are told is unobjectionable. So also we are informed that it is proper to conjure up a theory as to the origin of the universe, even though in one's imaginings sense data are never incorporated. This is unobjectionable. But it is most objectionable, we are told, to conjure up ideas of God, or of a future life.

Now the reason for this acceptance of one imaginative feat and rejection of another is, that while it is conceivable that we may in the course of time check up and discover the truth or falsity of the nebular hypothesis or of the Darwinian theory, it is not conceivable that we can ever by an empirical process find any evidence as to the existence or non-existence of God. We see now where the trouble is going to arise. It is all a question of whether the only kind of experience which is to be admitted as testimony is eye or ear or nose—sense—testimony. Our scientists will allow any amount of imagining, so long as it be subjected to sense experience for verification. What is the defender of religious faith to say to this?

It is to be contended in answer to this that no one has the right—the scientific right—to dogmatize as to what is a valid form of experience. It is to be contended that the validity of *experience* is on its part

quite as much a question of experience as is the validity of testimony; it is to be held that there is nothing in my eyesight, as such, which makes it a final court of appeal as to the existence of a jinricksha. There is nothing as such in any man's senses which makes them infallible for the purpose of auditing the books of the imagination. What gives to the senses their right to decide is merely the fact that in the centuries their reliability is vouched for by an infinite amount of corroboration and collateral testimony. In a word, we yield to the judgments of sense experience, because in themselves they are vouched for by racial experience.

We repeat then that there is nothing in *momentary* empiricism as such which makes it infallible, and that sense experience must be subjected, quite as much as must ideas, to the tests of racial experience. We assert then that no one has the right to dogmatize as to what is at this moment or that a valid form of experience, since validity is not a question of the moment, but of the ages. Having said so much, we may dismiss the objector who protests that the idea of God is one which can never be subjected to the provings of experience on the ground that *his* experience is the only kind that is to be admitted to court. We dismiss this objection and pass on to a statement of what the Idealist considers to be a criterion, according to which the creatures of his imaginings may be judged.

The Idealist takes the position: imagination is the organ by which is discovered the unknown meanings that life possesses. With the imagination we specu-



late upon things beyond the range of sense. These speculations we subject to racial experience for justification, and any idea which the racial experience proclaims to be real, we assert to have won its title to the term Reality. In a word, we submit to experience; but we do not submit to partial or momentary or laboratory experience, but rather to the experience of human beings;—of the whole world of human personalities. It is thus that we justify, upon grounds which scientifically speaking are unimpeachable, our faith in Idealism.<sup>4</sup>

To sum up what has been said in defense of Idealism as the better method in which to interpret this world, it would not be beside the point to quote the old Hebrew prophet: "Where no vision is the people perish;" and also to repeat the words of a modern prophet: "A man's power is his idea multiplied by his personality." These two statements reduce the whole argument to a practical problem. When all is said and done, as has been pointed out at length, it is in the end a question of practicality. Happiness and welfare, peace and prosperity, have always been, and must in the future be, the exclusive product of Idealism. It alone can create them! It alone is responsible for the fact that men have arisen above the brutes; it alone is the method whereby men can attain to the dominion over all the earth; it alone can usher in those better

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<sup>4</sup> Compare at large "The Credentials of Science," by Prof. J. P. Cooke.

days for which all men—be they socialists or anarchists or monarchists—are in search. In whatever direction we turn we find the practical value of this attitude, rather than of the naturalistic attitude, toward life. If then Naturalism is impractical, and if it plunges one into innumerable difficulties of thought and act; and if on the other hand Idealism, even though it brings with it intellectual difficulties, does yet present a practical scheme of life; if we are faced by such a dilemma as this, we frankly choose that horn which, though not faultless from the point of view of logic, does nevertheless hold out to us a hope and an inspiration.

Having said so much it becomes us to proceed to the next subject:—the question as to how we are to take or interpret this preferable scheme. For we are far from having exhausted the question of Idealism, and there is much more to be said before we have so much as approached that vast problem in search of which we set out,—the problem of the existence of what Christians call God.

Although we have found that to be an acceptable hypothesis which approaches the universe upon the supposition that it is full of meaning; and although we have shown reason for the belief that the chief value in an object lies in its significance; and although this leads us on to the further conclusion that behind the appearance and transitoriness of everything that we see there exists something which is real and permanent; it yet remains for us to ask what that reality is. Again, and to be more explicit: if there is a mean-

ing beneath and within phenomena—a permanent value which makes it possible for the transitory on its part to possess value,—what, it must be asked, is the nature of that which creates the meaning? If meaning is found, there must be that which makes it. If there are sermons to be found in stones, and tongues in trees, and books in the running brooks, and good in everything, then it is to be concluded that there is a somewhat which preaches the sermon and speaks through the trees and writes the books, and is responsible for the goodness of the world.

What, then, it is for us to ask, is responsible for the significance which is to be found in all creation? This is the question which must be answered in the next chapter upon the interpretation of Idealism.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE INTERPRETATION OF IDEALISM.

IT has been the object of the preceding chapters to point out that men find objective nature significant; that they demand something more in life than is allowed them by the Naturalist; that when it comes to a choice between a mechanical world and a meaningful world they clamorously prefer the latter. It has been admitted that in all ways the problem is one of presumption; that acute definition is impossible because of the limitedness and relativity of our knowledge; but the point which the apologist tries to make plain is that Idealism is humanly superior to Naturalism, for the very human reason that it is less objectionable, and offers fewer philosophical and practical, and perhaps scientific, difficulties. Having then cast in our lot with the Idealist, and having determined to approach nature with the conviction that there is more in it than appears to the eye or ear or to any sense, it is now necessary that we ask what the nature of this "more" shall be taken to be?

There is more in nature than the senses can tell us of. If this be so it follows as Idealism postulates, that nature is more than a mechanism, since a mechanism is a thing which is empirically comprehensible—which can be grasped by the senses. If, once again, nature is more than a mechanism it follows that it is comprehensible only by means of philosophy, since

philosophy is the only method by which we can deal with things which exceed the limitations of experience. Nature, in a word, is that which we have termed a "whole" or an "idea," and it must be dealt with as such. The process by which one deals with "wholes" is, as has been pointed out, interpretation. Let us therefore endeavor to interpret nature.

The first thing to be noted is that the belief that nature possesses a meaning suggests inevitably that there must be some thing, or power, or person, that creates and is responsible for this fact. A meaning implies the presence of something which is not ephemeral. Whenever a perishable or transitory object possesses a significance, the conclusion to be drawn is that behind the transitory there abides an eternal which shines through it and gives to it its meaning. A thing does not possess significance until it is seen to be the representative of, or manifestation of, a power which lies behind it. Significance implies that a thing is a *sign*, and a sign is an object whose importance lies not in itself, but in that to which it points, or in that which placed it as a pointer. In this instance we are concerned with that which put the sign in position; we desire to know who set up and owns the sign. To say the same thing in another way, a thing must be "possessed" before it can possess meaning. What, then, it is to be asked, possesses nature? Or to express it in yet another way, if nature shows signs of being possessed where shall we look for the possessor?

That is the problem which confronts us when we seek to interpret the universe—to be idealistic. What

possesses nature? Obviously whatever it is, it is something over which time and space have no dominion. It is something which is eternal and infinite! How, then, shall we define the infinite and eternal which gives to nature its meaning; which puts the tongue in the tree, and the book in the running brook, and the sermon in the stone, and the good in everything?

At once on the presentation of this problem there arise two solutions between which we have to choose. The pathway which lies before the beginner in Idealism leads immediately to a bifurcation; in one direction the path leads to Pantheism, in the other to Theism. In other words, the thoroughgoing Idealist ends, when he pursues his theory persistently, in one of these two forms of thought. Every kind of Idealism is reducible in the last resort either to Pantheism or Theism. To these two phases of the subject it is necessary now to turn, and because it is the most easily approached, let us deal first with Pantheism. It presents the phase of Idealism which, because of its apparent simplicity, makes the loudest appeal to the seeker for truth.

#### PANTHEISM.

The study of Pantheism like that of Idealism begins with a bifurcation in the roadway. One straight road does not stretch out before us, but two, and they run in opposite directions. As has before been stated, Pantheism is not a distinct form of thought, as is Naturalism or Idealism, since its various forms are always reducible in the end to one of these larger and ultimate categories. *Pantheism is either an emotional Natur-*

*alism or an emotional Idealism.* In a word, as a theory it is only a matter of form and not of substance, inasmuch as substantially it is ever either naturalistic or idealistic. Now, though we are in this chapter dealing with Idealism; and though one form of Pantheism is purely naturalistic, it is necessary nevertheless in this place to attend to this kind of Naturalism, if for no other reason than to point out that it is not, as it is often supposed to be, idealistic. Let us begin then our study of Pantheism with this problem.

What we have to make plain is that a certain kind of Pantheism, the best known, perhaps, is utterly naturalistic. The type to which we refer is that which was so splendidly set forth by the philosopher of Amsterdam, Spinoza.<sup>1</sup> Spinoza's form of reasoning finds, to be sure, but little favor in these days, and yet the substance of what he taught is far more prevalent—as will be shown in time—than is generally recognized.

Now what is the nature of this form of Pantheism? To make use of language quite different from that used by its great exponent, we may begin by saying that this kind of Pantheism identifies God—or that which abides and presides and gives to nature its significance—with the universe. "You seek for an object for reverence," the teacher would say; "you seek for that which explains the presence of the tongue in

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<sup>1</sup>The student can find a short and simple explanation of Spinoza's Philosophy in the volume devoted to his work in Blackwood's Philosophical Classics.

the tree or of the sermon in the stone; you desire to know what God is? Then be it known to you that He who sustains and upholds the world, and He who does so abundantly manifest Himself in the sunset or in the flower bell or in the chorus ending of Euripides;—that the Eternal and Infinite who reigns and governs and accomplishes these wonders is none other than the Universe itself! Surely the Universe is infinite and eternal! And surely it is competent to endow with significance each and every atom! And surely it is an object for reverence than which none can be higher!” Such in our own language would be the answer of “the god-intoxicated man” to one who asked him about his Maker.

Now the first thing to be noted about this theory is its likeness to a kind of Idealism; and the second, how that in reality it is blankest Naturalism. In the first place, this identification of the Infinite and Eternal—of God—with the objective universe savors of Idealism, and in fact is so accepted by many because it seems to present the most alluring form thereof. See how this is so by examining the mood in which the devotee of this kind of “religion” places himself. He lifts up his eyes to the mountain tops and ponders on their splendor; he watches the innumerable stars as tranquilly they climb the sky; he listens to the strains of some majestic symphony, or to the winds singing in the trees; he smells the rose when first it blooms, or the earth when the thaws of early spring make it give forth an odor of indescribable richness; he touches with his hand some mighty rock and pauses in won-



der at its strength;—thus with his senses he approaches nature, and at each approach he meets with wonderful experiences. The further he goes and the more thoroughly he investigates, so much the more marvelous does he find the world to be. Everything that he meets bewilders him by its strength or its beauty or its majesty. The powers of nature and the charms thereof speak to him in diverse tongues, and in unpremeditated awe he falls down upon his knees and cries out to the world, “Thou art God!” Nor is this an unusual action, for who can fail to be impressed when he discovers the wonders of nature?

Perhaps the best illustration of this mood is that voiced by Wordsworth in our own language,<sup>2</sup> and by Goethe in the German. Take these lines of Faust, wherein he endeavors to explain his creed to Gretchen, as a consummate expression of this mood of the wor-

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<sup>2</sup> Compare “Tintern Abbey” and the Sonnet:

“The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
“Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;  
“Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
“We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
“This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
“And the winds that will be howling at all hours,  
“Are upgathered now like sleeping flowers;  
“For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
“It moves us not—Great God! I’d rather be  
“A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
“So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
“Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
“Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
“Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.”

shipper of nature as a whole — of the naturalistic Pantheist:

“Who can name Him?  
Who thus proclaim Him:  
*I believe Him?*  
Who that hath feeling  
His bosom steeling,  
Can say: *I believe Him not?*  
The All-embracing,  
The All-sustaining,  
Clasps and sustains He not  
Thee, me, Himself?  
Springs not the vault of Heaven above us?  
Lieth not Earth firm-stablished 'neath our feet?  
And with a cheerful twinkling  
Climb not eternal stars the sky?  
Eye into eye gaze I not upon thee?  
Surgeth not all  
To head and heart within thee?  
And floats in endless mystery  
Invisible visible around thee;  
Great though it be, fill thou therefrom thine heart  
And when in the feeling wholly blest thou art,  
Call it then what thou wilt!  
Call it Bliss! Heart! Love! God!  
I have no name for it!  
Feeling is all in all!  
Name is but sound and reek,  
A mist round the glow of Heaven!”<sup>3</sup>

In this we see how Faust, in awe-struck wonder, finds the universe so full of splendor and beauty that for him it presents an object worthy of worship.

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<sup>3</sup> Compare “Faust,” Part I, Garden scene.

Not only is it worthy of worship, but it is worthy of those thoughts with which men approach their Divinity. But if we analyze this mood, which is typical of all pantheistic moods of this type, we see that it is no more than what is sometimes called "cosmic emotionalism."<sup>4</sup> For what is it which is at the bottom of Faust's awe? Is it not feeling? It is because he *feels* so deeply in the presence of nature that he is thus so wrought up.

Now ask another question: What is the basis of this feeling? Is it not unadulterated sense experience? It is all a matter of aroused sense activities. His eyes and ears bring him such tidings of the world around him that he becomes ecstatic. His entire mood is sensual. He presents a problem not in ethics or in theology, but in æsthetics. It requires no acuteness to perceive that his God and his theology are the exclusive result of sense data, and that whatever meaning the universe may possess for him is no more than a sensual meaning.

If our distinction between Naturalism and Idealism has been clearly made, it should be evident that this mood is clearly one of emotional Naturalism. Faust by limiting, as he presumably would, his sources of information to the senses, does thereby proclaim himself a Naturalist. In the second place, whatever meaning he acquires through these sources is a matter, as

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<sup>4</sup> See a most alluring essay on this subject in "The Creed of a Layman," by Frederic Harrison, Chapter V.

the last lines reveal, for emotionalism and not for ratiocination.<sup>5</sup>

To such teachings it is to be answered: that the Christian religion calls only for such a faith as shall be the product of the whole personality;<sup>6</sup> that in the life of the Founder of Christianity is exemplified its rejection of a shallow emotionalism by the manner in which He dealt with many who wished to be persuaded to His teaching by works of wonder—works which would arouse emotional enthusiasm; that wherever re-

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<sup>5</sup> It would require a separate chapter upon the psychology of religion to discuss the question here raised as to whether after all religion is any more than a matter of the emotions. That this is so is agreed to at considerable length by many; Schleiermacher with his definition of religion as the sense of dependence would perhaps be the most powerful exponent of this point of view. A recent exposition, and a most readable one, may be found in the "Psychology of Religious Belief," by J. B. Pratt, wherein following out the lines so splendidly worked out from a similar point of view by James in his "Varieties of Religious Experience," he argues that experience reveals the fact that the "undertone" of feeling is the real rock on which religion rests. It is an immovable foundation. Reason is shown to be not fundamental so far as our appreciation of values is concerned; while feeling, whether crude or refined, methodistical or mystical, is the originator of all real belief.

<sup>6</sup> The use which has been made of the word "emotional" in this chapter, it should clearly be understood, is that one which is customary in common parlance. In some of the more recent books on religious psychology "emotions" is used with what would seem to be the same significance as that intended by the author in the phrase "whole personality."

ligion has been emotionalistic it has within a short time degenerated into a complete Materialism. In another place we deal with this same problem by implication, pointing out that Christianity as the perfected religion is above the emotionalism of primitive forms.

Exactly the same verdict has to be pronounced upon all kinds of Pantheism in which the only avenue through which information and inspiration come is that of sense experience. Sense data can never originate an idealistic position; for though one be stirred to his depths by the glory of some saffron-colored sunset, and though one dream of Meadows of Asphodel and Islands of the Blest; though under the spell of the cosmic emotion one build a paradise; yet, because of the origin of the inspiration, all is doomed to evaporation. And this is so because the things which originated the ideals are perishable, and because whoever looks for inspiration to that which is ephemeral commits himself into the care of that which cannot eternally satisfy. Once the sense stimulant is gone, what remains to reproduce the experience? Unless one's intuition and inspiration come from that which is by hypothesis eternal, his faith is by his own premises perishable.

The theistic Idealist's faith is based upon the belief that his inspiration comes from an eternal and invisible power, which is quite different from an inspiration which comes from the marvels of the perishable world. Emotional Naturalism is not idealistic for the all-sufficient reason that it originates in sense experience, and further, because that which depends upon the senses

only for information is that which violates the first principle of Idealism, which is: that the significance of the world and its ability to inspire men with awe owes its origin to something beyond and beneath that which appears—to something which cannot be apprehended by the senses. To conclude, then, it may be said that a mood which is caused by appearances—be they the sun or the stars or the flowers or the poetry of the world—is a mood which is based upon that kind of data which can never create a true Idealism.

It is most interesting to note how that this form of emotionalism illustrated by Goethe and by all who look to pregnant nature for the origin of their high thoughts is but a refined and conscious recrudescence of the Paganism of the ancient world.

Religions may be said generally to have prospered in history in the same order as that in which thoughts rule in the growing child. At first all was objective and materialistic and emotional. This corresponds to early childhood in individuals, and to that form of religion wherein it is all a matter of the senses. As, for example, the worship of idols, in which the worshipper concentrated his emotions upon an act of reverence, and neither paused to *reason* out its value, nor proceeded to *will* himself to deal righteously. The reason and the will were not brought into Paganism, any more than they are made use of by the infant.

Then the second stage in religious development might be said to be that of reason, when, like the maturing man who supposes that he can solve the prob-

lems of life with his newly discovered ability to think and make syllogisms, the maturing world imagined that it could with its new-found wisdom write down the meaning of the spheres. Hence we had Scholasticism and volumes without number upon philosophy. All of these were symptoms of an age when men believed that they could with their minds solve the problem of the universe.

Then came the third stage, which we might call the modern stage, in which thinkers, like men who have passed the smartness of their teens and realized that work and will alone can find the "way," turn to the will, in the belief that by it and through it they alone can reach the desirable conclusion. Accordingly we have "ethical culture" societies, and are told that right doing is the method by which humanity is to find the enfranchising truth.

Now the position of the Christian should be a summing up and a composition of these three forms. It is to be believed that the sense of dependence is a legitimate element in the true and perfected religion. But it is only one-third. Again to ratiocination and volition must be allowed their respective shares. We might, speaking historically, hold up Christ as the illustration of the perfect fusion of these elements, and then admit that His followers have but begun to approximate to His ideal. The early days were perhaps emotional, owing to the influence of contemporary Paganism; the Middle Ages were over rationalistic, a result of the blessed Renaissance; and in the present days we see too much, and may see more, emphasis

placed on the will to do righteously. The Christian believes that when the Kingdom comes men will have passed these partial moods, and will stand out, as did the Master, equally influenced by the three elements which go towards the making of the perfect personality.

Having now dealt with the first and most apparent form of Pantheism, let us turn to the second type, that which is recognizably idealistic. It will be remembered that it was pointed out that when one began the study of Idealism he found himself confronted by two *kinds*, the pantheistic and the theistic. Having characterized that type of Pantheism which is not idealistic, it is time that we take up the type that is, in order that we may decide whether it appeals to us as the best of the two pathways into which the highway of Idealism bifurcates.

In the pursuit of truth one is ever meeting with these dilemmas. We began with that between Naturalism and Idealism, and now we are facing the one between the two kinds of Idealism. Further than this, the sympathetic student, when confronted by such dilemmas, must always be prepared to find aspects of the truth on both sides, and, as in the problem which now lies before us, he must expect to learn that it is not a question between one theory which is all wrong and one which is all right, but between one which is wholesome and human, and one which is unwholesome and abnormal.

To begin with, then, let us describe the two types



of Idealism to which we have reference: idealistic Pantheism and Theism. Pantheism is the belief, as we already know, that God is all, and that all is God. It conceives of God as immanent or *in* the world. It declines to allow that God can be in any measure apart from His creation. On the other hand, Theism conceives of God as both in the world and out of it; as being both immanent and transcendent.<sup>7</sup>

These, then, are the two forms which lie before the Idealist awaiting his choice. Which shall we choose?

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<sup>7</sup>There was a time when Christian thinkers thought of God as transcendent only; as utterly removed from the world; but such a conception flourished only under primitive conditions, and at a time when theological thought was by reason of its fanaticism reduced almost to the level of the bizarre. An interesting example of this way of thinking is that given by John Fiske in his "Idea of God," where he tells of how as a child he pictured the Almighty.

Another form of transcendent thought must be remarked upon, and that is that form popular in the eighteenth century under the name of Deism. It was the creed of a group of able thinkers—who did not push their conclusions far enough however—who taught that God having once made the world left it to itself and remained from it forever separate. The occasion for this theory was a desire to retain belief in the Divinity and yet deny the possibility of miracles. This was effected by conceiving of the Creator as existent and yet unable by reason of the law of His Being to interfere with that which He had once created. At this place we cannot discuss this problem farther than to say that it fails in its object, because it was so evidently the creature of a desire to avoid certain conclusions—the possibility of miracles for example—at any cost. The student is referred for discussions on this subject to J. R. Illingworth's "Immanence and Transcendence."

In order to decide we must examine into them that it may be seen whereto they lead us.

Of the many forms in which idealistic Pantheism appears, that which is perhaps the best known—because of its notoriety—is so-called Christian Science. But there is a more noble and ancient expression of this form of belief, and that is that which is to be found in the religion of primitive India.<sup>8</sup> Or, again, and to come down to more recent times, we find an expression, perhaps the most brilliant expression of it, in the philosophy of Hegel. But with the actual outcroppings of this creed we are not concerned. Moreover, it is to be noted that those who profess it in its various forms are generally eager and hasty to deny that they are Pantheists. What concerns us just now is the theory itself rather than the theorizers.

In brief then it may be premised, as it should already be understood, that the fundamental tenet of idealistic Pantheism is that all is mind; that each and

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<sup>8</sup> It is exceedingly difficult to deal with Brahmanism, because in its present polytheistic form it reveals but few traces of its original Pantheism. However, the present fantastic worship of gods-many is but a crude development of the theory that everything is a manifestation of the eternal mind, and so far as we are able to assert anything positively about this fine old form of religion, we can say that its essential doctrine is that all is mind and that everything which appears to the senses is illusion. The student should for convenience consult some shorter volume upon the history of religion, such for example as that by Allen Menzies.

every atom or object, personal or impersonal, is but a manifestation of the all-engulfing, all-designing mind. Whether these multitudinous manifestations of the Eternal Mind are illusory and non-existent, as some would have it, or whether they are temporary and relative realities, as perhaps the great philosopher would express it—these details are not essential to the discussion here; what we must grasp is the fact that we are asked to believe that in the beginning and in the end all was and will be cosmic mind. How are we to greet this proposition?

It is to be realized primarily that this position possesses real attractions. If we could accept it, it would relieve us of many of the inconveniences which surround the simple Theist. It does away with the perplexities resultant from the conceiving of God as Eternal and Timeless, and yet as coming into time relations with the world. It is an easy solution to the problem created by the juxtaposition of our free wills and the foreknowledge of the Father;—it solves the problem of predestination and free will. It does away with most of the difficulties which meet us when we speak of the divine government, and is the simplest hypothesis by which to account for "providence." It solves the problem of matter and evil by relegating them to the convenient cupboard of imaginary delusions. But with all of its advantages it yet possesses one disadvantage of such proportions as to make it for toiling humanity worthless, and that is, that it deprives men of their individuality. If all is mind, and if our minds are but manifestations of the Eternal Mind,

then are all ideas of separate and individually responsible personalities but hallucinations.<sup>9</sup> As has been pointed out, it is not a choice that the Idealist has to make between one thing that is all wrong and one that is all right, but between one which is humanly valuable and one which is humanly worthless. All idealistic positions—as well as all naturalistic ones—are hypothetical, and what we have to do is to decide which hypothesis is preferable.

Consider, for example, the result of accepting as a final truth this denial of the separateness of our personalities; this theory that in reality each one of us is no more than a manifestation of the eternal and all-absorbing One. Were this so, then is it not evident to begin with that all moral issues would be blurred? For what creates a moral or ethical issue, if it is not belief in individual responsibility—the individual's power to purpose? That such a belief as the ability to purpose involves us in fathomless difficulties about free will it has been admitted. But when one is dealing with life he has to accept difficulties of all kinds, and it is to be contended that to throw over individuality for the sake of avoiding the problem raised thereby, and to accept in lieu thereof a Pantheism wherein there is but one mind and one will, is to fly from lesser to greater evils.

Further, it is to be argued that the progress of the race is in proportion to man's recognition of individ-

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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of this see Andrew Seth's "Hegelianism and Personality."

ual responsibility—of individual purposes and minds. Experience shows us how wherever a people have rejected this difficult belief, they have degenerated. As Paganism destroyed men by making them Materialists, so has idealistic Pantheism destroyed men by making them indifferent to the demands of social and economic and ethical welfare. And why should they not become indolent and indifferent, if the One Mind utterly dominates their minds, and if all of their acts, whether good or bad, are to be taken as manifestations of the Eternal Mind? It is a very practical problem which confronts the Idealist when he has to choose between Pantheism and Theism. In aiding him to decide one cannot do better than to recommend him to a study of the development of the different races, with particular reference to the results reached by those races which have believed in the inviolability of individuality, and the races which have rejected that belief. On the one hand we see energy and activity and progress, on the other inertia and inactivity and decay.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> It is sometimes suggested by superficial thinkers that the inactive people are the happiest, and that with the individualistic energy of Christendom has come nothing but sorrow. To such it is to be replied that if one defines happiness as sensual enjoyment this is without doubt true, but that upon such an hypothesis the hog in his wallow is the happiest of creatures, and that even the hog has pains, and hence the *summum bonum* of happiness must be conceded to the stone or stick. True happiness is a question of achievement, and where that is found, is found also the conviction that the individual is an unit of mind and purpose.

One other objection is to be entered against pantheistic Idealism, and that is that it is apt to be exclusively emotional. That this is so will be seen from the fact already indicated that surrender of individual responsibility brings with it loss of will and reason. All pantheistic positions are in the end matters of temperament. This is a dangerous word to handle, temperament, since it may be answered that all Idealism is equally temperamental. But there is a wide difference between an emotional temperament and one which proceeds from a well balanced and well developed personality. In the one case the result is deleterious, and in the other wholesome. The Pantheistic temperament results in a destruction of initiative, the Theistic in its encouragement. If Pantheism, begin though it may, upon an idealistic basis—in the belief that all is mind; if Pantheism become a question of the emotions, as it would seem inevitably to, then it must end in being naturalistic; and the objection to this is, as has already been shown, that it is a rejection of Idealism and a complete capitulation to its antithesis.

In the end, it has to be repeated, this whole problem is reducible to a matter of preference. It is a question of the relative worth of human needs, and men's comparative evaluation of the same. It is not possible for me to prove that my form of Idealism is truer to reason than my neighbor's. The persistence of various kinds of philosophy proves this. If any one form of Idealism could have been demonstrated to be the truest, then would the philosophical war long

since have ceased to be waged. Between an Idealism which postulates that the explanation of the meaningfulness of the world is to be found in the fact that it is but a manifestation of mind, and the Idealism which explains this fact upon the hypothesis that the world is the creation of the mind which is at once immanent and transcendent; between these two positions it is a question as to which is best calculated to meet the demand of the needs of humanity. The cautious and yet fearless philosopher will admit the possibility of there being a large element of truth in idealistic Pantheism. He will avoid attempting to argue it out of existence.<sup>11</sup> He will rather take his stand upon the fact of human needs, and assert that they are not to be met by an annihilation of human personality, but by an assertion of its reality and definiteness; and then beyond that, by belief in the personality of the Governor of this Universe—by the belief that that which makes this world so significant is that it was made and is now governed by a personal God.

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<sup>11</sup> The student is to be warned against endeavoring to convert by argumentative logic—by philosophy—the disciples of Mrs. Eddy. This is likewise to be avoided in all cases where the position objected to is based upon a pantheistic form of Idealism. It has been emphasized already that “by searching” man cannot find God, and it is to be repeated here. The position of pantheistic Idealists cannot be shaken by Theistic logic for the reason that they rest their belief upon the same kind of “searching” as that adopted by the Theist. The difference in their conclusions has resulted not so much from what their logic has taught them as from what they have learned from the experience of humanity.

But when we make use of this word "personality," and apply it thus to the human and divine Being alike, it is necessary that one hasten to define just what he means thereby. To this question of the meaning of the word personality as applied to men and God, the next chapter must be devoted.



## CHAPTER VI.

### HUMAN PERSONALITY.

**I**N the preceding chapter we rejected as valueless for practical purposes that interpretation of Idealism which destroys or in any way discounts the importance of a human personality. It now remains for us to examine the other method of interpreting Idealism, that, namely, which by anticipation we have already named the theistic.

Theism is the theory which holds that the significance of the world is to be ascribed to the fact that it is the creation of an infinite Person; a Person who, apart from and distinct from these little personalities of ours, governs and directs the universe. It will at once be evident that if we are to look into this theory properly it can only be done by investigating this word "personality." Until we know what we mean by this term we cannot pretend to deal with Theism itself.

But when we commence to study personality we discover that our efforts are not merely introductory to the problem of Theism, but that they form the basis of, and penetrate into the heart of the entire subject; that so far from the study of personality being a separate study from that of Theism it is identical therewith; that all theistic problems stand or fall with the problems of personality. And this is so because the problem of personality is a final problem. It cuts to the very core of life and thought. It reaches down

to the utmost depths of philosophy. It is, in a word, the problem as to the being of God and as to man's relation to Him. All theology presupposes an understanding of personality; and a complete understanding of personality would be a complete theology. They are to all intents and purposes interchangeable and mutually inclusive questions.

Having said so much, it need hardly be added that when in the following pages we devote ourselves to the meaning of personality we are definitely discussing Theism. Though the subject be treated from an apparently non-theological point of view, a consideration of this interchangeability of problems should convince the student that we are in fact going to the heart of the matter.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The foregoing statement might seem to be precipitate, but its truth will be perceived when it is pointed out that all denials of the freedom of the will (and by the freedom of the will is merely meant the positive side of what is meant by personality; personality and will-freedom are interchangeable terms, or rather we might say that a person is a free object, and an object which is free is a person), all denials of the freedom of the will are preceded by rejections of the belief in a personal God; and vice versa all rejections of the conclusions of the Theist are antedated by denials that men are free. The intimate connections between these two things should be very apparent. If I am a cause unto myself, then am I beyond the compulsion of Nature's law, and hence must I look behind that law if I would find the final cause of the Universe. Hence it is that whoever would accept or reject belief in God must in the first place accept or reject belief in his own freedom. The possibility or impossibility of a free will underlies the possibility or impossibility of the existence of God.

As yet, however, our terms are but loose, and if we are to come to any definite understanding, and if we are to profit by this discussion, and if we are to discover the peculiar value and significance of the theistic form of Idealism, it can only be as we know exactly what is meant when we use this word personal.

Now this is the more necessary because according to the common interpretation of the word person, it is not necessarily associated with things religious, and does not inevitably suggest God. The ordinary idea of personality is in reality one which would be utterly inappropriate if applied to the Divinity. If, for example, one were to ask the average man what he meant by personality, he would probably reply that he meant that by which he was differentiated from the beasts. Now as a matter of fact this is an element, a large element in its significance, but when one is dealing with cosmic thoughts rather than with biological, the proper significance of the term is to be found in its relation, not to the beasts which are below us, but to the Being which is above us. In a word, the crucial importance of this term in matters philosophical lies in the fact that it indicates not our superiority to the cattle but our inferiority to God. We mean when we speak of ourselves as persons, not that we possess a prize, but that we lack it. Let us look thoroughly into this matter.

In the first place let us emphasize what has been said, by admitting that the Greek Xenophanes was quite justified in ridiculing the ancient religious teachers upon the ground that they brought God down to

their level (what he said was that the lions if they could think would picture their God as a majestic Lion), just because these same theologians—if we may call them such—conceived of personality as a unique possession of men—a perfect possession. Now it is perfectly true that if we think of personality as something possessed by us in its perfection, that then to apply the term to the Infinite Being who rules the Earth would indeed be bringing God down to the level of humanity.

But when we thus reason we are overlooking the larger half of the truth. Whenever we think of personality as something of which we are to be proud, then are we thinking of ourselves from the bestial point of view. The fact of the matter is that when we have considered it from all points of view we shall find that we have no reason to be proud of our personality, but rather to be ashamed. It is only after we have advanced thus far in our philosophical thought that we shall begin to understand the true significance of this matter; it is only when we shall have understood and appreciated this other aspect that we shall be able to advance in theological thought.

Let us then proceed to ask what is meant when we affirm that our personality is something of which we should in reality be ashamed. What is human personality from the philosophical point of view? And we may reply by saying that it is imperfection and incompleteness! From the ideal standpoint human personality is a term with which we mean to denote that which though striven after is not attained—imperfec-

tion. A person is an animate object dissatisfied with its condition—a Tantalus with the prize in view but beyond reach. When we call ourselves persons we mean thereby, that though we are not really personal, yet we would be, and at least have a glimmering of what that attribute implies. I am a person, not because I am somewhat, but because I can see beyond these limitations and hindrances to what I may become.

This definition, though unusual, is absolutely true. When we look upon the Universe from the Idealist's standpoint we learn that we call ourselves persons not to magnify but to humiliate ourselves! We have not named God after us, but *ourselves after Him*. When we use this word we refer not to what we already have, but to that of which we possess a faint and feeble reminder and suggestion.

What, for example, is the most characteristic trait of the normal man? Is it not to bewail his limitations? To proclaim his dissatisfaction? To expound his imperfection? No normal man is free from this feeling of limitedness. None are satisfied. Whoever so much as dreamed of a man who was content with his accomplishments, or satisfied with his knowledge, or resigned to the limitations which are put upon his will? All men by instinct would see beyond the horizon! All men by nature resent the shortness of their sight, and the dullness of their ears, and the pathetic dimness of their other senses! Now, when thus we consider impatient and impotent man, we realize that this sense of his incompleteness is in reality his glory. It is because men have cried throughout the ages, "I shall be

satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness;" it is because they have thus felt their emptiness, that they have been spurred on and inspired. Give a man much and you damn him to a life of lazy safety, give him little and you bless him with a life of zealous striving. It is the "infinite wealth of weakness" which is our great possession, since it spurs us on and endows us with the joy and the glory of fighting for strength.<sup>2</sup>

Even so it is man's realization of his weakness—not his strength—which enables him to labor and to plan. Why is it that we rise up early to scheme and work? Why do we desire more and more learning? Why do we struggle for more and more power? Is it not in order that we may quiet the demands of our nature;—the demands which we make to approximate more nearly to the potentialities with which we feel ourselves endowed? Our deepest instinct is one of dissatisfaction, and this it is which drives us and makes us what we are. We live only to demand and to desire and to hope and to strive for more than we have. In other words, our lives are at best but *purposes*, and a person is a purpose. The two words might almost be used interchangeably. The person is what he is—is more than the brute—because he is a being of purpose, and the purpose is to overcome limitations;—to see and know and accomplish ever more and more. The dissatisfaction which drives us is the result of the knowledge which comes to us with the years, of what

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<sup>2</sup> Read William Watson's poem, "The Dream of Man," for a most suggestive illustration of this point.

personality ought to be—a purpose which forever accomplishes.

But this thought must be further illustrated if it is to be clearly grasped. Of what type of humanity do we use the phrase, "There is a real man?" Is it not always of those who despite their abilities are none the less humble? The heroes who win our regard are those who have achieved renown because of an intense dissatisfaction with their conditions; who have taken hold grimly of the wheel of life and worked with might and main to better their own or their neighbor's condition. Such as never strove—the unambitious, the self-satisfied, such have never won the world's esteem. It is of the humblest, and hence those who labor hardest for self-improvement or race improvement, that we say Behold a Man! Our criterion of manhood is realization of insufficiency and a consequential intensity of striving.

As we grow older and wiser, our dissatisfaction with little deeds deepens; as we learn ever more and more, we long with Socrates even yet more for wisdom; as we begin with the increasing years to come to the full height of manhood, we discover that in reality our height is as nothing in comparison to what we would have it be, and the taller we become, and the loftier the mountain top on which we stand, the more embarrassing becomes the horizon, and the more do we feel our inability to see afar.

It is when we thus reason, for example, that we perceive that we should never use the present tense of the verb "to be" in applying it to ourselves. If

my discontent increases with the accumulating years, and if with each addition to my knowledge I realize ever more and more how ignorant I am; if it is thus that we ever seem to be less and less, and seem with each accomplishment to be less and less of an accomplisher; if, once again, with the expansion of my powers I come nearer and nearer to an inevitable realization that I am not what I would be;—if this is the path along which persons travel, then they can never properly announce that they *are*, but rather that they hope they may *become*! Who can stand upon his feet and fearlessly proclaim, “I am?” Who will not rather announce, “I am striving and struggling in the hope that I may *become*.” As it has been put in another connection, only the Lord of Heaven and Earth and the beasts of the field may say, “I am.” The Almighty *is*, and therefore can use such words, while the thoughtless brutes being devoid of all idea of imperfection (which is the explanation of why they on their part do not labor like men) can likewise without shame, affirm that they *are*. This is what is meant by that curious old phrase in Exodus, when God spoke unto Moses and said: “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me.”

To sum up this examination into the essence of human personality we might say that its dominating characteristic is the sense of *developableness*. The brutes, not giving evidence of the idea that they might develop their powers, are not called by us persons. We do not predicate personality until we experience some evidence of a conscious ability to develop. When



we see a being, however low, however degraded, in whom there remains a single sign of developableness, we treat it as, and call it, a person. Such, for example, is the difference—the infinite difference, between the anthropoid ape and the Andaman islander. Further than this, we predicate personality in increasing degrees and with increasing confidence as we see more and more a realized potentiality and possibility of power. Finally, and it is perhaps metaphorically, but it is nevertheless true, we only say *Ecce Homo!* of those who have developed in the past and show evidence of a desire for even greater development in the future. Such is the criterion of the passive side of personality.

It would be interesting, if space permitted, to go more deeply into this subject and to discuss the relative importance which exists between the three elements which go towards the making of a complete man, i. e., the Emotions, the Intellect and the Will. For us in this connection all that can be allowed, however, is the statement that though the foregoing would seem to place as the fundamental element the Will—that whereby we develop—yet such an interpretation would be permissible only were we to fail to note that there is a difference between the will as a part of a personality and the will as the whole person. In other words, one must notice that the will as distinct from the emotions and intellect is one thing, and the will as the summing up of a whole character is another. It is this will which sums up and subsumes the three elements of Will, Emotion and Intel-

lect that must be identified with the essence of personality; the essence which we designate as the sense of developableness. Such then we affirm to be the passive aspect of what personality is. Let us now turn to the positive or active aspect.

To do this we need only sum up what has been said in another way. If sense of developableness is the passive side, then endeavor to develop must be the other. If I cannot say "I am," I can at least say "I strive to be." Struggling, striving, working, planning, endeavoring, to become what we feel we might be; this is the active expression of a person. In proportion as this expression is lacking do we fail to predicate real manhood. In proportion as we see men acknowledging their imperfection do we admit their progress towards perfection.

Thus then do we define and describe human personality, and it is only when we do so that we are able to take the same word and apply it reverently and reasonably to the Infinite Being who directs the cosmos on its way. Let us, now that we have this true meaning clearly in our minds, turn to an examination of that problem which precipitated upon us this question of the meaning of the word personal; the problem of theistic Idealism; of how it is and why it is that we dare apply this same word to God.

## CHAPTER VII.

### DIVINE PERSONALITY

**W**E must recapitulate. In our study of Idealism we concluded that that which gives the meaning which we find in the Universe must be the power which drives it. Having gone thus far, we had to pause and ask whether or not the hypothesis of the Pantheist might not be a sufficient explanation of everything; whether the vastness of the power of the rushing Universe might not by reason of its very vastness be enough to account for the tongues in the trees and the sermons in the stones. To this suggestion we had to demur on the ground that mere vastness, if blind and purposeless, could carry us to no satisfying end; could put no tongues in the trees, for the simple reason that from the beginning upon such a theory it was premised and presumed that there could be no language for tongues to speak, and that the meaning which appeared to exist was no more than the creation of an emotional phantasy, a sensual excitement, a form of hysteria, or whatever else one chooses to call it.

Now, when we had progressed thus far we had come to one of those places or neutral zones in philosophy where regress or progress became a matter not of logic but of preference. Honesty is the best policy, and it is to be admitted, as it has been so often, that when it comes to a choice be-

tween Naturalism and Idealism, or between a Pantheism which would explain the book in the running brook by the sheer awfulness of the power which makes it run, and a Theism which explains it upon the principle of a Personal Director;—it is to be admitted that when this choice is presented to us we are in the same predicament as that in which we were when we had to choose between a meaningless and a meaningful creation. What is to be decided is not, which is the most logical, but which is preferable; which is the least objectionable and the least serviceable and the least humanly reasonable of the theories.

Even so when we approach the question of a personal God. We must understand distinctly that the matter is to be decided in the light of utility and (that most hackneyed of all expressions) common sense. So let us now turn to our study of the personality of the Absolute from this human point of view.

Now that we know what is to be understood by the term human personality we need fear no such criticism as that made by Xenophanes of old. We no longer fear to be told that we are bringing God down to our level. If in calling God a person we are presumptuous, the presumption then lies in our daring to lift ourselves up towards Him. That is the crime of which we are guilty, and what we have to deal with here is the motive or reason which leads us into this crime, and it is to be found in what have been called for many years the Cosmological and the Teleological arguments.

As has been before stated, these arguments are apt to

be considered out of date, and their force is generally thought to have been lost. Without doubt so far as their ancient conception and composition is concerned they are antiquated and more or less ineffective. But being fundamental forms of thought, forms in which men must think, if they are to think at all upon final problems, it will readily be realized that there must be a modern way of composing them, such as will make them applicable to modern conditions.

For example, when Paley, in the days when evolution had but dimly been dreamed of,<sup>1</sup> argued as a tel-eologist, he said: "Were a savage to find a watch upon the seashore he would at once conclude that a mind like to his mind must have made the machine which so agreed with his own crude ideas of mechanism. It is just what he would have made had he had the ingenuity." The argument is then carried a step further, and we are bidden to believe that upon the same principle, men perceiving the mechanism of the eye, or the arrangements by which the crops grow, naturally believe that a person like unto them must in the beginning have designed them. Now in arguing thus in these days of evolutionary knowledge, we lose ourselves and our cause, since it can be at once replied that the eye or the crop was no special creation but a development from some previous condition—a development which the needs of the world forced. So far then as special creations and special instances of ingenuity are concerned we cannot argue with regard to them

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<sup>1</sup> Paley's "Evidences of Christianity."

teleologically. And yet the teleological significance of the universe as a whole is by no means lost. In fact modern knowledge has but intensified its value. Let us take up then this argument from design from a modern point of view, and show how it gives a worthy excuse for believing that the power which drives the world may be called personal.

By personal it is to be remembered we mean, not that He who rules the cosmos is like us, as Paley would in olden days have put it, but that we are like Him. We are like Him in that we perceive Him to be the realization of what we would be. We cry, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness," because we are now dissatisfied and long to be like Him—we are dissatisfied with the limitations which are put upon our wills—we are discontented with our condition, and cannot be contented *till we can will as He wills*.

But what do we mean by saying that He wills? Are we not at once in using such words bringing Him down to us? No! for by using such a word we mean to express the idea that the Infinite Energy which drives the world does so without fault or failure or feebleness—does it in no imperfect way, but in the perfect way. We see, for example, how that the history of the world has been one of unerring development and progress. As men—and to try and look from any other point of view is bad psychology—we see how that through the ages the Power which has directed the cosmos has done so without hindrance; how that for It to plan has been to accomplish; how that for It to will has been to perfect. We see that

nothing resists the will of the Infinite, and how that it completes all that it undertakes. In a word, the Absolute is a *prevailing purpose*—while we, who can never make the will and the accomplishment coincide, are *failing* purposes.

But again we have it objected that the whole question has been begged in applying the word "purpose" as an epithet to the Infinite. To this it is to be answered, that the word is used in no illicit way; that by purpose we mean to express that which cannot be expressed in any other way. When one sees a force accomplishing results (that behind evolution, for example), he does not necessarily predicate to it all of the attributes of human personality when he says that it purposes; he does not thus attribute to the Absolute such human traits as memory, or forgetfulness, or wishing or planning. These are but traits which are consistent with imperfect purposing. To plan implies limitations which are not to be found in the Power which drives the world. But there is a great gulf between the planning of finite beings and the planning of the Infinite which is coincident with accomplishing.

In speaking then of the purposing of God we do not make Him like us—limited and finite; far from it! If one will but think the matter out it will become evident that to assert that purposefulness is, *a priori*, an attribute, applicable only to human beings, such as ourselves, is exactly the same kind of an error as that which is involved in asserting that in speaking of God as personal one is bringing Him down to men. *When we apply purpose to the Infinite we mean there-*

*by prevailing purpose, and not failing purpose*—and there is the width of infinity between prevailing purpose and the purposings of feeble men. The one is equivalent to eternal accomplishment, the other to eternal striving.<sup>2</sup>

Now it is just this fact of eternal accomplishment which makes men in the midst of their failures and struggles look up to the Highest. It is the fact that they see in the Power which directs the Universe exactly that prevailing purposefulness which they themselves long after, that makes them call themselves by Its name. It is because men see the Infinite do what they yearn to do—bring all of its plans to com-

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<sup>2</sup>The problem of the relation between the accomplishments of the Infinite power and purposing, has been worked out perhaps more fully than any other theistic question. In a recent volume of V. F. Storr on "Development and Divine Purpose" we have it thus expressed: "As we cannot think of our own volitional activity except in terms of ends which ultimately take a moral coloring, so we cannot think of God except as purposing moral ends. It might be retorted that God may will an immoral end, just as a man, in virtue of his freedom, can and does, will to do evil. From the point of view of our present argument that is a fair retort; but, even so, the objector has granted what we are primarily contending for, namely, the existence of a will with a content and characteristics, seeking positive ends which it conceives as worth pursuing. What we must banish from our minds is the thought of bare, indeterminate will." (Page 280.)

This whole problem is discussed with power by James Martineau in his "Study of Religion." To such larger works as these the student is urged to apply himself. Here we are able only to hint at the significance of the problem.



pletion—that makes them recognize in it their archetype. It is because they see in Him a perfect, unimpeded Doer that they understand how imperfect and impeded they are.

The enlargement of our knowledge, the discoveries of the scientists, have but deepened our appreciation of the Will-fulness of the Infinite. The theory of evolution, for example, is no more and no less than a statement of cosmic purposefulness. The larger the deed the greater the doer, and with each addition to our knowledge we perceive more and more clearly the majestic proportions of the divine accomplishment. What the “far off divine event” may be towards which the whole creation is moving is not in this connection a question at point. All that is needed for the present is to indicate that the whole creation does move in a definite and harmonious manner, and to point out that all movement in a definite direction can be thought of by human beings like ourselves under no other terms than those of purpose.<sup>3</sup>

When we speak of the personality of the Absolute, then, what we mean is that it reveals to us the perfect illustration of that which we feel ourselves to be feeble imitations. Our little lives are made up of unending attempts to accomplish. We struggle from the morning until the evening, and yet are never able to bring to fruition. Change and chance, weakness and folly, inability and ignorance, these all combine to frus-

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<sup>3</sup> Compare V. F. Storr's "Development and Divine Purpose," Chapter XII.

trate our efforts. We feel that we are free, but for all our freedom to will we do not yet possess the ability to perform. Then at length we lift up our eyes to the hills, we survey the universe, we see how that it is driven by an all-compelling, all-completing Force, and as we study that force and see its omnipotence, its ability to do whatever it attempts, to enforce all of its commands, we say to ourselves: "That is our archetype! That is the perfect will and the perfect personality of which we are but suggestions!" *And so we call it Personal, not in order to make it like us, but in order to indicate what we would be if only our wills could prevail.*

That, then, is our motive for calling the Infinite a person. Oppressed by our limitations, and depressed by the obstacles which bar our way, we look up to the Absolute and see in its prevailing purposefulness the real meaning of the word, and the real illustration of what it is;—we see that divine personality means Accomplisher. It is in this form then that we would put the Teleological argument. To the question, What is the meaning of the world's apparent movement towards an end?—we reply: It means that it is forced towards an end by a prevailing will; a will which never falters, a will which is infinite.

#### THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

But then there is another matter to be considered in this discussion of the personality of the Infinite, and it is that which comes under what is called the cosmological form of thought. If teleology deals with the

*whither*, cosmology is the study of the *whence* of the world. If teleology finds in the purposefulness of the Infinite Power reason for calling it "personal," cosmology finds in its *reliability* evidence which points in the same direction.<sup>4</sup> Let us now study for a moment the

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<sup>4</sup>It would be best to state briefly the form in which it has been customary to state the Cosmological argument. It is the argument, as has been indicated, of the "whence" of the Universe. Whence this vast mechanism, so amazing and so all-absorbing? Obviously, since a result postulates a cause, what we perceive must have been caused. Let us say that the Energy which is everywhere evident caused the result which we call the present universe. But now we cannot think of that energy as itself uncaused; everything suggests some prior cause. So we ask what caused the Energy? Thus by a series of regressions the cosmologist would take us back to a First Cause which is to be identified with God.

But there is an unanswerable objection to this form of the argument. It is that keenly made use of by cultured Buddhists, who, on the Christian's positing the All Creator reply, "Who made Him?" The trouble lies in the fact that the postulate with which one begins this kind of reasoning cannot be abandoned when one comes to the idea of God. If, that is, every product must be the result of some producer, if every effect must have a cause, what right have we to say of God that to Him this line of reasoning does not apply? How can we escape asking "Who made God?" if we have worked back to Him upon the assumption that the human mind cannot think of a thing which has not been caused?

In the text here will be found a totally different application of the principle of dependence. Perhaps it should not be called the "Cosmological" argument, but the reader will discover after reflection that the basic idea, that of dependence, rules supreme in the way in which the argument is here conducted, quite as much as in the more usual method.

question of the reliability of the Cosmic Energy, and see what that fact of reliability suggests.

In the first place, consider how we depend upon the regularity and trustworthiness of the Absolute. This dependence is so vital a part of our make-up that, like all other things which are vital, it is not, and cannot be, fully realized. We never appreciate facts which are not to be dissociated from ourselves. Nevertheless the fact is there. From sunrise to sunset we depend upon the regularity of the Cosmic Energy. This seems a trivial statement because it *is* trivial, practically; but actually and psychologically it is portentous and overwhelming. Underneath the child are the arms of the mother, and expecting nothing else the child makes no comment. Underneath us are the Everlasting Arms, and we, expecting nothing else, make no comment. But just now the point to be made is that when comment is perforce made, it is of one inevitable type; when we do remark upon the Everlasting Arms—the arms which hold the earth in its place and move it around the sun; the arms which bring in seed time and harvest, and the blessings of the Earth's abundance; the arms which make the coal to burn, the electricity to labor and the oil to flow, and the steam to propel, and the wedge and the pulley and the lever to do their work;—when we think of the Infinite Energy which thus drives the world, whether we be agnostic scientists, or gnostic theosophists, or theists, we are compelled to realize that we *depend* upon it, and further, that we *trust* it and *rely* upon it.

Treat such a statement as we may, we cannot escape

the conclusion that we rely upon the cosmic energy. Did we not thus attribute reliableness to it—consciously or unconsciously—we would never dream on our part of making plans for the day's work. The presupposition of plan-making; the presupposition of scientific investigation, and of every other act of man, is trust in the reliableness of the Infinite.

This is the first point that is to be made clear, and the second is to be seen when it is asked: What does the attribute "reliableness" suggest? And we begin the answer to this question by saying that in using the word reliableness we are making use of a phrase which is applicable only to that which might likewise be conceived of as *unreliable*. When we say a thing is trustworthy, we by suggestion attribute to it the possibility of its being untrustworthy; and once we do this, we by suggestion bring it within the sphere of free will activity.

It is no answer to this to suggest that we speak in exactly the same way of the reliableness of a piece of steel or the dependableness of a watch, since when we do thus speak of a piece of mechanism we are not using the term in quite the same way—we are speaking in undiluted metaphor and are consciously for purposes of poetry or convenience personifying the inanimate object. Nor is it a valid answer to reply that in both cases we are making equal use of metaphor, since though not in kind, yet in degree there is an infinite difference between the reliance which we place in a watch which we ourselves could make, and our consequent feelings towards it, and that which we place in

the Infinite Force which is so vastly beyond our comprehension, and the consequent sense of relationship thereto. That we are making use of metaphor when we speak thus of the Infinite is to be allowed, though in a different way from that in which it is used of the watch. This is to be willingly granted for the simple and harmless reason that *all speech is metaphor*, and without metaphor man cannot so much as utter his most commonplace thoughts. But, and here is the point, it makes all the difference in the world *how* the metaphor is used.

But return to our question as to what this attribution of reliableness to the Infinite suggests. This brings out a fact of vital importance and one which has not often enough been attended to in this connection. Beyond the incidental fact that the attributing of reliableness postulates likewise the attributing of *unreliableness*—a point which is of value only by way of enlargement—beyond this fact which reveals the connection between reliability and freedom, is the further fact that “reliableness” does in reality *mean*—under the form of an abstract noun—exactly what we try to express with the word “person.” Just as it might be said that the word “bravery” is but the abstract equivalent for what is indicated by the word “hero.” So it is that by reliableness we indicate what the word person is intended to suggest. To appreciate, however, the force of this it is needful that we recall what has been said upon the true meaning of the word personality.

If it were true that personality were a term devoid of

implications of perfection, then what is here affirmed would be untenable. But since we do not dream of asserting that all persons are what they should be; since persons *are* not, but are rather becoming; since a human person is a bundle of faults; even so we dare state that the word reliability is the idea which it is intended should be expressed by this word person. This is so because person means in reality something very different from that which a *human* person actually is; even so does reliability stand for an attribute which is far beyond the deserts of ordinary mortals. We mortals are certainly not illustrations of reliability, but *we are equally unworthy of being looked upon as illustrations of real personality.*

Now the vital point comes in when we perceive that what we do conceive to be a perfect person, a person such as we would like to be, a person devoid of our faults and failings;—what we do conceive as being implied in, and potential in, personality, is exactly what we mean by the word reliability. When the idea contained in the word personality originated it was meant to express the realization of what a man might be were he faultless. And so it is that we affirm that that which reliableness suggests is that which is expressible only in the word Person.

To sum up. We think of the Infinite Power which rules the world in terms of trustworthiness, and trustworthiness is expressible only in the language of personality. The conclusion which follows from this is not that the Infinite is comprehensible to us, but that so long as we think of it, and depend upon it, just so

long must we bow to the limitations of language and speak of it and think of it as personal. This conclusion would not be helpful had we not already seen that we are not interested in proving that God is like us, but rather in showing how everything points to the fact that we are like Him; that we are only feeble imitations of Him. Therefore we need not regret that our conclusion is not more drastic. All that this method of dealing with the argument from dependence is intended to do, is to show that we have, cosmologically speaking, as much, if not more, right to speak of the personality of the Infinite, as we have to speak of the personality of John Smith. In both cases it is merely a question of moral relationship—of the relation which results from dependence upon good will.

We have now illustrated the modern value of these arguments. If one pursue the matter further he will but find more and more reasons for our thinking of the Power which is above us in the terms which we apply to ourselves. He is a prevailing purpose, and He is reliable. These are two attributes which are inseparable from the language of personality. They represent the qualities which above all others we aspire to obtain. They are the attributes in accordance with which we adjudge the worth of our neighbors. They are the criteria by which we measure manhood. Little wonder then that mankind, finding these qualities after which it aspires, and by which it measures its individuals, and up to which it looks in the Force which drives the world, should speak of



it as personal. It is to be questioned seriously how else that Force could be spoken of. In what way could we express the capacity and the power of the Absolute which would in any way make its processes plain to language-using men, unless we spoke of it as Personal?

To conclude and sum up what has been said: (1) The Infinite can be spoken of as a Person without irreverence or violence of reason. (2) The Infinite must be spoken of in such terms if one desires to refer to one's dependence upon it, or if one desires to consider its ability to accomplish and prevail. These are the results to which we come, when with an adequate understanding of what personality means, we study the relation which humanity bears to the Power which drives the world. It is not only that it is reasonable to use this much abused word in speaking of that Power, but that it is necessary if one would actually state in the inevitable metaphor of language just what the relations of man to the Infinite Energy are.

When one weighs these conclusions seriously he finds that they are most helpful. He finds himself provided with an hypothesis which is of incalculable aid in dealing with the demands and supplies of life. It has been insisted all along that the question is one which has to be referred, in the last resort, to practical needs, and it must now be insisted that this conclusion—that the Power which rules is personal—is one which supplies us with a working solution to the world-problem which is of final value—of value so great as to overawe all objections.

That with which we commenced our philosophical examination was the problem of the *why*, of the world's peculiar suggestiveness. We quoted, indirectly, Browning and his saying that we can never shake ourselves free from the intimations which nature forces upon us of another world, or of another and higher Power. He asked why do we find "fancies" in the flower bell, or why does "some one's death" or a "chorus ending from Euripides" arouse within us thoughts of things higher than any that we can here perceive. If we accept the interpretation of Idealism, which has been given here, namely, that the world is governed by a personal God, then there should be no need to ask any more of these "whys." The matter is from now on self-evident, and the apologist who has led his readers to this threshold, and who has shown them that it is reasonable to believe that the power which drives the world is a Person;—the apologist who has gone thus far need pursue his philosophical task no further.

Given this explanation of the significance of Nature one can at once grasp the reason for the tongue in the tree and the book in the brook. And more than this, it is to be asserted that under no other theory can these things be satisfactorily accounted for. Even with idealistic Pantheism their propriety seems less. But when we yield to the reasonings of the Theist, and believe that God has made all things to be His ambassadors and representatives,—that a personal Deity created the earth and the sky and the sea, and guided the hand that wrote great poetry, and was responsible

for the death of our friend;—when we accept this truth and bow down our heads in reverence, then the mists are driven away and we stand in a world bathed in the sunshine of understanding. And that is the great object of philosophy, to make the world comprehensible, and we insist that the philosophy of the Theist is the only kind that truly attains to this end.

To put it all in another way, we found ourselves when we began this discussion in a world of Mystery and Purpose and Dependence. We found that every object suggested one of these qualities, that every deed brought one of them into prominence. We found that all was subject, whether we wished it or no, to the rulings of a power which is omnipotent. And finding such wonderful phenomena we paused in awe-struck wonder—asking and seeking to find what it all implied. First we went to the Naturalist and asked him to explain it to us, but his explanation did but confuse things, and instead of clearing up the mystery made it but so much the more inexplicable. What he had to say to us made the mystery of the tongue in the tree far more profound. He tried to explain it away, and yet the more he explained and the more he sought to minimize it, the louder did the tongue cry out and the deeper became our conviction that the voice which we heard was real. Accordingly since the explanation of the Naturalist had, instead of helping us, made us much more curious, and much more convinced that despite his protestations there was something to be found out, we turned to the Idealist.

First we asked the idealistic Pantheist to tell us

what it all meant. His reply, however, was cruel and demanded of us admissions which we as human beings were unwilling to make. "If you would understand the book in the running brook," said he, "you must begin by giving up all ideas about separate and inviolable personalities; you must learn that all is mind, whether it be the brook or the stone or your own self—that every object is but a manifestation of the all-engulfing mind. The whole universe is mind and its manifestations, and you are but one of the many epiphanies."

But we were utterly unwilling for many reasons—most of them purely humanitarian—to give up the very thing which we deemed to be most worth while;—the only thing whereby we saw the world to be redeemable: individual effort;—and so at last we turned to the theistic Idealist, and from him at last received the explanation of which we were in need. He told us that the world was the creation of a Personal God, and that each of us was His child. Once we heard this all the mystery vanished, and the purposefulness of the world became plain, and our feeling of dependence was justified.

And so having come to the point at which these things—the fancy in the flower bell or the sermon in the stone—are explicable, we need not for our purposes further labor over philosophy. All that the apologist has to do is to present a reasonable explanation of the origin of these phenomena with which life is filled, and having done that much he can leave

enlargements upon the subject to those who care to undertake them.

The end of the part devoted to philosophical Apologetics has now been reached, and it is well that before turning to the next section we state exactly what the purport of our argument has been. In the first place, the ideal that has been before us has been that of *suggestiveness*. At the cost of leaving many things unsaid, and of saying some things in an unusual way, we have limited the discussion to a narrow field. In the second place, we have purposely refrained from carrying the argument beyond a certain point—a point perhaps unsatisfying to many. But all of this has been necessary in order to force the reader to do his own thinking—since unless that results, then this and all other books upon such a subject will have been written to no purpose. If in any subject auto-education is essential, it is in Apologetics, and the apologist can render no greater service than to force people to thinking along certain lines.

In conclusion, then, let us point out where self-education and examination has to begin.

Inasmuch as we cannot by searching find God, and inasmuch on the other hand as we cannot by logic postulate that there is no God, the task which lies before the thinker is to discover which of these alternatives is humanly the more acceptable. He must turn to the weather vanes of human needs and mark which way they point. Now this process of noting the weather vanes is what we call learning through experience. Experience! that is the court into which

we must take our problems. Experience! that is the school in which each man must educate himself. It may be that the kind of experience undergone by some will be of a purely practical kind; on the other hand, those who are metaphysically inclined will weigh these matters in the scales of intellectual and ratiocinative experience; they will see in their long reasonings, and they will learn as they tread the path of scholarship, just what the real values of life are, and in what relation to them stands the faith in an Infinite Father. And surely if any men should be glad and ready thus to trust to the provings of experience it should be the Christians.

This is then the school in which the student is urged to educate himself. He is urged to be patient, and not to mistake momentary triumphs or failures for permanent results. He is urged to remember, that as all good things are hard to find and possess, so above all blessings it is difficult to grasp the philosophic conviction that "God's in His Heaven." We must work out our own philosophical salvation, and all that has been put down in the preceding pages is intended to point out the lines of thought along which that desirable end is to be attained.

## APPENDIX.

### ON THE PROBLEM OF EVIL.

**T**HERE is one problem which cannot be left out of a book of this kind, much as one might wish to, and that is the problem of evil. It is not a major problem, but it is a very large one—the largest of all of the minor problems which present themselves for solution to the Christian thinker. We say, “much as one might wish to,” because it is always well in dealing with the existence of evil to begin by admitting that it cannot be solved with ease—if it can be solved at all.

To begin with, what is the problem? It is that which arises the moment we find in juxtaposition: the belief in a loving Creator—Father and the presence in the world, of suffering and sorrow and sin. If, it is asked, God is infinite and able to do anything, and if also He is a loving Father, then “why stand we in jeopardy every hour?” Why the Messina and San Francisco earthquakes? Why these slums in all large cities? Why so many men and women who prowl about like the ravening wolves, seeking whom they may for their own gain destroy? Why all this evil in the world which God has created and declared to be good? This is an unavoidable question, and has been thrust at believers time and time again. Now by deep thinkers like Schopenhauer; now by shallow sophists like Robert Ingersoll; now by earnest Chris-

tians to whom the contradiction which it seems to create is more than they are able to let pass. Why then is there evil in the world?

The first thing to be said is that the worst thing a man can do when presented with the problem of evil is to suppose that it can be easily solved. One is almost tempted to say that most of the intellectual pitfalls which have come to the Christian Church have been prepared by enthusiasts who have imagined that they had found a simple solution to this terrible question. In the early centuries much of the heresy sprung from attempts to escape from this dilemma by short cuts. What we call Gnosticism, for example, was the chiefest philosophical enemy that arose within the midst of the faithful in the early days, and much of it originated out of a desire to relieve the creed of the inexplicable presence of evil in the world. The leaders in this movement proceeded in this way: If God is good, they argued, then He cannot have created that which is bad. This being so, whence did it come? Evidently from a creator of evil things who works against the good God. From this process of reasoning, common to almost all eastern thought, there came the theory which is called Dualism, or the existence of two creators, one of them beneficent and the other maleficent. Another typical instance is that of Ormuzd and Ahriman, the opposing deities of Zoroastrianism. Now it is to be noted that in the early days of the Church many thinkers broke loose from her moorings and went over to Oriental dualism, all be-



cause they supposed that by so doing they could dispose without difficulty of the problem of evil.

But not only in those early days did men thus go astray in order to escape from the embarrassments of sin and suffering, since equally in these times we find theories springing up which owe their origin to the desire to explain away what seems to be a blunder. Of all the theories which have sprung from this desire, Christian Science is the most prosperous. It endeavors to attain its end by denying the existence of evil—by saying that it is a creature of the imagination.

Then, lastly, this problem has been dealt with by many orthodox believers by stating that private evil proves itself in the end to be for the public good. That is to say, we are asked to believe that the ultimate end of God's purposes is the welfare of the whole world, and that in order thus to bring in universal good He has at times to subject individuals to misery. We are told that the sufferings, for example, at Messina will in the end be seen to have been for the welfare of the world at large. Now this theory is no explanation of the presence of evil; it is at best but a pious subterfuge, and it in no way touches or relieves the thinker's situation.

Having thus stated the problem, and exhibited typical ways in which it is dealt with, we are in a position reverently to approach it. From what has been said it should be evident to begin with that we must proceed cautiously with the problem and not imagine that there is a solution easily to be found. The very plausibility of the dualists' solution, and the simplicity of

the others that are offered should make us suspicious. Whenever one is confronted with a difficulty which has baffled centuries of thinkers he should look with suspicion on any solution which is short and simple. For if it were the true one then why these centuries of debate? Men do not labor for ages over matters which can be solved with an aphorism. And we cannot hope to find in a day an answer to the question over which thinkers like Augustine toiled for a lifetime.<sup>1</sup> What is to be said here upon this problem, and how are we to find a solution which shall be in harmony with our philosophy of experience?

Perhaps the best way in which we can introduce what is to be said is by repeating that it is not to be expected that men can solve with an aphorism a question which has puzzled thinkers throughout the centuries. In other words, it is to be put down that no solution can be immediately reached; that whatever we learn and however we unravel the vast enigma will depend upon our experience.

Our problem is to be regarded as an integral part of the whole problem of personality. The difficulties which meet us in dealing with the problem of human life are in themselves so large that this new and subsidiary difficulty cannot be treated apart by itself. From one point of view, and that perhaps the most important,

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<sup>1</sup> The entire dispute about predestination, which began with St. Paul, reached its zenith with Augustine, and blazed out again in the writings of Calvin, is attributable to the enigma of evil.

this question is but another aspect of the original question as to the meaning of the universe. Now when we dealt with the main problem we concluded that it all depended in the first place upon our conception of human personality and its needs. Then in the second place we decided that just what the needs of free individuals were could only be found out by an appeal to experience in its various forms. Now this is exactly what we must do when we approach the question of the existence of evil; we must appeal to experience with the assurance that in it we shall learn—not to-day or to-morrow, but in God's own time—the meaning of this forbidding and fearful element in life.

We begin with an unfaltering belief that somehow all things are working under the Father's direction for a final good. As it has been put by A. K. Rogers in "The Religious Conception of the World," the justification of evil lies in this: that "the spirit of practical optimism, arising itself out of the process of experience, is the prophet of its own success, and of the actual attainment of good objectively in the world." (Pages 254-5.) In other words, the plain fact that we are optimists under the circumstances prophesies that there is good ground for our faith. We have as it were "overcome evil" or at least the fear thereof. We no longer yield with the ancient Greeks or the Moslems to passive fatalism. We know that in the end all will be well.

But, it will be averred, this in no way excuses God for letting evil into the world, and that is the whole of the problem! To this it is to be answered that in

the first place the world we have is the world we have, and to think of the world which we *might* have had is pessimism; and pessimism is the negative of Christian Theism, and is thereby excluded by our first principle. And then in the second place it is to be said that to speak thus is to make God a different kind of being from what experience has taught us to believe that He is. To quote Rogers again: "If we are conditioned by God's life, so too we condition it in turn. It is to the fact that our natures are what they are that the necessity of evil is due—natures that are undeveloped at the start, and that can only attain to wisdom and stability of character by a gradual process of growth." (Page 258.) What we are we are—persons who are put into this world for the purpose of working out our own salvation. Evil is the rough material on which we hammer out our characters. It is our opportunity to accomplish that which is eternally worth while. This being so we do condition God, and place a limit upon His creative power, since He could not have made us what we are and kept us free from possibilities of sin and suffering.

Hence we do not seek to excuse God; rather we set aside as immaterial and uncalled for all demands that we should. We accept the world in which we live, and the conditions which necessarily accompany human personality. We accept these things and look to a larger experience than that which is now ours to make plain to us why creation was carried out along such and such lines.

Thus it is that we deal with this great problem of

the real presence of evil. We do not deny its existence; nor do we seek to minimize it; nor do we seek to explain it away; nor do we seek by pious maxims to quiet questioners. With all its ugliest facts we accept it, and because we are Christian optimists we know that in time we shall be able to understand those things which now through the darkness of the glass appear to us so black. In a word, if we are so bold as to begin at all with belief in God; if we are so daring as to commence with the conviction that we are free agents in a world of law and order; then we have within us the courage which can silence all the questionings which arise in the presence of life's ugliest scars.

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## PART III.

### HISTORICAL APOLOGETICS.

CHAPTER I. The Scope of the Subject.

CHAPTER II. The Historicity of the Gospel Narrative.

*“For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty.”*

— II Peter, i: 16.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE SCOPE OF THE SUBJECT.

**I**N our study of Philosophical Apologetics we learned that from the point of view of human reasonableness it is better to believe in a Personal God than to believe, either that there is no God and that the world is driven by blind force, or that the Universe itself is God. We said that in the last resort it was a matter of preference. Now, even though one accepts the conclusion there reached as the preferable one, it has not brought him to the point of view of the Christian. The Christian conceives of God as a loving Father, who not only made the world, but who likewise has from the beginning cared for it, and particularly for mankind. To such a conclusion it is not possible for philosophy to bring us. There are many and interesting arguments by which it has been shown that God would have cared for the creature, and that He would have sent His Son to redeem mankind; these things have for centuries been the subjects of long and skillful argumentations, but it is to be doubted whether such argumentation has been useful and effective.

Even allowing that the Almighty is Personal, it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to show that He would "for us men and our salvation" enter into this world in order to save. As was pointed out in the first section, were the way of God scrutable it is hard to see how an historical revelation can be accounted for.

It is just because God's ways and thoughts are not ours, that in order to make Himself fully known to us He had to become Incarnate,—to humble Himself to our estate, and through the medium of the flesh teach us the things which we needed to know. The historical appearance of the Infinite! That is it on which we must fall back when we wish to learn the full truth about the Father. The appearance in time is the final court to which the Christian has to appeal! No matter how cogent our arguments may become, and no matter how persuasive our philosophy, in the last resort as Christians we have but one satisfying source for argument, and that is the historical revelation.

So it is, then, that Historical Apologetics are the only kind that really avail in dealing with the details of our subject. Vital Apologetics of course underlie even the historical; but we are dealing now not with life but with *argument*, and of arguments the only one which actually counts is the historical. This should make plain then exactly what is meant by the title of this third section. In it is to be found a setting forth of the historical facts upon which the Christian depends for the actual fortification of his faith. And further there will have to be discussed the grounds on which we dignify the Christian revelation with the word historical.

To begin with, then, we must set forth the historical facts upon which is based our faith. These it is readily grasped are to be found in the book which we call the New Testament, and in the record of the Christian Church. Historical Apologetics are concerned, then,

in the first place with telling what occurred in Palestine between the days of Herod the King and Pontius Pilate the Governor; and in the second place in recording the results of that wonderful occurrence. In this place it is not necessary to repeat the Gospel story. It is the best known story in the Western world at least. Every child knows how that Jesus was born in Bethlehem; how that after thirty years of silent preparation He came forth and publicly convinced certain of His followers of the fact that He was the long looked-for Messiah; how that He astonished the world with works of wonder and with words of power; how that by the envious Jews He was apprehended, tried and crucified; how that He rose from the dead, and in the presence of many was taken to another world; how that as a result of His short ministry He taught the world the only truth which can save and set men free. All of these historical facts need no repetition here. To them we need merely to point, and state that they form the first part of the historical basis upon which the Christian relies for the justification of his belief.

Then comes the second part, the result of this brief ministry of the Master—the story of the work and development of the Christian Church. As a piece of empirical argument this record of the life of the Church is the most powerful of all arguments. The results, the magnificent results of that insignificant event, do more than anything else testify to the eternal value of that which was from the worldly point of view so petty. That life and that character which to

the eyes of men were so steeped in sorrow and failure have in the centuries shown themselves to have produced such joy and such victories that one is forced to recognize that there were in Jesus more than ordinary powers and knowledge. The story of the Church's triumph over the forces of this world,<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup>It is to be remembered that the Church conquered the world before she allied herself with it, and that it was only because she conquered first that she was able to make the regrettable alliance later. The triumph of the lesser and the weaker over the greater and the mightier, is a testimony to the divinity of its Founder far greater than His recorded work and words.

Men often ask us to surrender our belief in miracles, so-called, and it is in this connection that we can most properly refer to that problem. Of course one has to define "miracle" as an illustration or exhibition of a law not yet understood. A miracle could not be something which broke through the conditions imposed by law. That is unthinkable. It must be a manifestation of some hitherto unknown law. And yet when one comes to apply this rigidly to the Gospel story he does not find himself aided especially in his interpretation. To be perfectly frank in dealing with this matter, it seems best not to use carelessly this explanation of miracles. It is logical, but when pressed is not altogether satisfactory. It postulates the existence of too many unknown laws. The best thing to do would seem to be to reason thus:

(1) Idealism postulates that we do not know all there is to be known about law and order.

(2) The acceptance of the possibility of an Incarnation, is accepting that which is clearly from the logician's point of view unthinkable, i. e., the Timeless One coming into time relations.

of what it now is, form the great argument for its divine origin. The apologist would sooner surrender, so far as forensic usage is concerned, the "miracles" of the Gospels than the miracle of the Church's career. It is honestly questionable whether, humanly speaking, we could not give up the signs and wonders which Jesus wrought, and, as a matter of fact, give up that which is one of the least significant of the things which can be said about Christianity's Founder.

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(3) The acceptance of the freedom of the will is the acceptance of something which for the Naturalist is an out and out violation of Nature's law and order—each free act is utterly miraculous.

All of this being so it would seem to be straining at a gnat to accept these "miraculous" major premises and find difficulty in accepting under any conditions those incidental and minor ones which are recorded in the Gospels.

If this prove unsatisfactory, as it probably will to many, then perhaps the best thing to do is to suspend judgment, and adopt the attitude that one must allow the possibility of the Gospel miracles until their historical invalidity can be shown. In dealing with an objector to the recorded miracles in the New Testament the first thing to do is, as has been insisted upon in the section upon Naturalism, to get rid of all incidental matters, to set in order the actual facts under debate, and getting down to first premises find out whether the objector is dealing with life from the naturalistic or idealistic position. If it be that he denies the possibility of anything which is not subject to known and observable laws, then all discussion as to occurrences recorded in the Gospels or elsewhere is but wasted time. If, on the other hand, he admit the possibility of occurrences which are not subject to known and observable (i. e., empirically verifiable) laws; if he approach life as an Idealist, then the proper thing to do is to ad-

His feeding of the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes is no breach of the law and is nothing extraordinary *in comparison* to His feeding of the multitudes during the past centuries with no other instrument than an unworthy priesthood and an unwelcome (worldly speaking) doctrine! His turning of water into wine is far less baffling than His turning thousands of rep-

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wise a suspension of judgment. Further, during this period of suspended judgment he must be and continue completely unbiased. It is not an unprejudiced position which is assumed by the Naturalists.

One has only to refer to the outspoken refusal of many even to listen to evidence upon cases of mind reading, to point out the prejudice of the average Naturalist in all matters where a violation of observable laws seems imminent. The Idealist must avoid this, and throughout must be willing to accept testimony from both sides; and more, must give as much credence to him who swears to one side as to him who swears to the other side of the question. Errors and mistakes from hysteria are inevitable, but one must none the less remain unprejudiced, since errors and mistakes are equally made by those whose hysteria shows itself under the guise of an obsession against the unusual. There is so much humbug in the world of "spiritualism" that one ought to be cautious and reserved. What we would merely suggest is that despite the humbuggery and fraud so prevalent one should maintain an attitude of impartiality.

In the last resort, we repeat, the Idealist must admit the possibility of the results of unknown laws—of laws which are not observable by the senses, and admitting that, maintain a suspended judgment. Nothing is more dogmatic and more hysterical than to assert the *a priori* impossibility of anything which is not accountable for under the *now* known laws of Nature.



robates into pious servants of God! His raising of Lazarus dismays us less than His raising of those who like Augustine were spiritually dead.

It is the marvellous growth, and the far more marvellous accomplishment of the Church which bears the loudest testimony to the Divinity of Christ.<sup>2</sup> In the presence of the facts which are written upon the pages of European history one cannot but pause and wonder. That so much good and so much power, and so many blessings should come into the world as a result of the life of Him who was crucified, is perhaps the most potent of all the historical arguments which can be brought to bear upon the problem.

Such then in outline are the historical arguments which more than all philosophical dissertations bear witness to the faith of the Christian. They are practical arguments, they deal with life, and as such they come close to us whensoever we handle them. But it is to be recognized that between these two forms of the historical witness there is a wide difference. No one attempts to deny the facts of the victory of the Church and its prodigious success. Many on the other

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<sup>2</sup> There is a familiar story which is an excellent illustration of this point. It relates how that a Jewish money-lender at the Court of Louis IX resisted all the arguments with which the pious King tried to convert him to Christianity. Finally, however, after a trip to Rome, a trip which the King supposed would completely turn him against the faith, he succumbed, telling the King that a Religion which had prospered in the face of so foul a leadership as that which he had seen at Rome must indeed be guided by Him who was Divine.

hand deny us the right to use the word historical as applied to the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The one we are told is patent to all men because to it the testimony is unquestionable and convincing; the other is problematical and its truthfulness questionable on the grounds that they who testified to it (the Gospel writers) were prejudiced and unable, by reason of the tensivity of the times, to bear what can be called reliable evidence. In a word the historicity of the Gospel story and of the whole New Testament is called in question, and before one can fully use that part of the historical argument he must establish the authenticity and reliability of those writings.

Let us get this matter distinctly understood, because only as one understands it can he fully appreciate the value of historical Apologetics. It amounts to this: on behalf of my faith in the Lord Christ, and in order to tell the world that it is justifiable, I adduce certain concrete living facts. In the first place, I tell of the work which the Church of Christ has done and refer to it as evidence of my Lord's Divinity. To this the world has no objections to offer except that unless I can show that this movement began with a real fact, and has not merely developed and accumulated strength as it proceeded—that unless I can show that that from which it began was all that it is claimed to have been, then will the work of the Church be put down and explained as one of the many curious phenomena with which the history of the world abounds—perhaps the most curious and astonishing.

So then if I am to persuade anybody of the final value of my faith I must show that the work of the Church is not to be explained as a curious and wonderful example of racial hysteria—of a belief which grew out of nothing but imagined facts—I must show the world that the marvelous story of the Church's career is to be explained and accounted for by the fact that those things which are recorded in the Gospels and Epistles and from which the Church drew its inspiration actually and really occurred. I need not necessarily demonstrate that this or that miracle was performed, but that the record as an whole is a truthful account of the life of Jesus.

We are in the last resort therefore driven to the task of showing the value of the Gospels and Epistles as testimony, and to this task, which is the principal task of this kind of Apologetics we must devote a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HISTORICITY OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

UNLIKE other religions, Christianity is closely connected with historical fact. The appeal to history is found in the earliest form of the Christian creed. While for most of the Oriental religions, the time or the circumstances under which they originated, are comparatively unimportant, the historical nexus of Christianity is a vital matter. The documents to which we have to refer when we ask what Christianity is, contain historical details, and among the essentials of the Christian faith are such questions as whether Paul the Apostle died in the reign of Nero, or whether the organization of the Catholic Church can be traced back to the time of the Flavian emperors. The importance of the historical side of Apologetics may be seen in the fact that recently the question has been asked whether the founder of the Christian faith was an historical character or not. This query has to be faced, and faced without impatience or passion. That the question should originate at all can only be explained because in the progress of scientific knowl-

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NOTE.—The writer of this chapter desires to express his obligations to Mgr. P. Batiffol's "*Orphéus et l'Évangile*," recently translated into English by G. C. H. Pollen, under the title "*Credibility of the Gospel*."

edge the laws of natural phenomena have come to be more thoroughly understood than the problems of man's personality. One accepts without scruple abstract formulæ, while one hesitates to acknowledge the indefinite possibilities of human genius. The result is that it would seem easier in these days to persuade the majority of the public that Dante's *Divine Comedy* could be written by a guild of Florentine artisans, than by the creative inspiration of one man.

In order to answer questions arising in regard to the historicity of the Life of Jesus, no methods of investigation or research should be pressed into service that are, or that would be, out of place in any other type of historical narrative. The application of criticism to the sources of the life of Jesus is no more out of place than the application of criticism to the life of St. Francis of Assisi. In both cases one is carried back to the reflected views of contemporaries, and in both cases, because of the absence of intentional literary authorship, one must depend on secondary accounts. The great characters in secular history, both political and literary, in many cases left direct personal records of their opinions. Jesus did not do this. We have, therefore, to depend on reports of his teaching rather than upon words consciously written down by him over his own signature to record what His life and His work was understood by Him to mean. This certainly adds a difficulty to the life of the founder of Christianity, which differentiates the study of Christian origins from the investigations of the lives

of military leaders and statesmen, such as Julius Cæsar, and literary geniuses, such as Plato.

The principles of historical research will be found to lead to the formulation of a few positive positions in regard to the historicity of the Gospel narrative. It is no longer possible to reject the Gospels as a whole, simply because they contain the records of miracles and supernatural events. It is no longer allowable to treat the story of a miracle as if it were the product of imposture. Too much is known to-day of the psychology of religion, individual and social, to encourage any such absolute *parti pris* where the religious convictions of mankind at other stages of culture are brought into play. There has been much revision of judgment also on the question as to the amount of time that must necessarily elapse between the period at which the supposed miraculous event happened and the period when it was first made a matter of record. The idea that a miracle is the result of a process of long growth in religious consciousness has been definitely abandoned. This point has been admirably put by Professor Harnack in the following words: "To reject narratives as useless or to shift them onto a later period because they relate miracles, is nothing but a prejudice."

Some of the most thoroughly impartial historical studies of the mediæval period are based on the use of sources that are filled with records of miraculous happenings. When St. Augustine in his famous book on "The City of God" says that he had personal knowledge of seventy miracles of healing that took

place in his diocese within the two years before he began the composition of the book, no one doubts the good faith of the author, nor is there any reason for suspecting the authenticity of the chapter of the book in which these events, regarded by him as proof of the miraculous, are recorded. In the same way, there is no reason to question the good faith of the author of "The Acts," or to suspect that he never visited the Island of Malta simply because he reports in his narrative of his sojourn there the fact that the father of Publius, the governor of the island, was miraculously healed by St. Paul.

It is impossible not to notice that the earliest documents accepted by the Christian community are treated to-day by historical critics without the prejudices of eighteenth and nineteenth century rationalism, according to which the presence of any element of the miraculous was sufficient in itself to eliminate the author in question as a reliable witness. It is a curious piece, therefore, of reactionary rationalism to find such a statement as the following in Reinach's "Orpheus," a popular summary of the history of religion, "that the Gospels are documents that cannot possibly be used for the history of the real life of Jesus." This trenchant phraseology is entirely opposed to the accepted principles of scientific historical writers today. The modern historian rejects nothing that can possibly throw any light, direct or indirect, on the age whose events he is examining, or on the personalities whose characters he may be analyzing. Monumental sculpture, casual inscriptions on stone or plaster, officially

inscribed records in marble or bronze, coins, fragments of papyrus containing personal letters, tax receipts, or items of personal expenditure, bits of pottery with scrawled inscriptions, all are grist for the mill of the modern historian. He rejects nothing, and is willing to apply the test of historical research to any kind of evidence that comes to him from past ages. Indeed, in order to control the statements of recognized historical narrative, it is often necessary to draw from a variety of sources. Good examples of this kind of research are seen in the work of Professor Ramsey, where he traces in elaborate detail the connection between the secular and religious history of the Roman Empire in the early years of the Church.

The first place in the recognized scale of documentary proof is conventionally assigned to the eye-witness, but even the eye-witness may, under certain conditions of prejudice or of training, be no more valuable than a writer who is separated from the events he is narrating by the lapse of a considerable number of years. The commentaries of Julius Cæsar are from the very fact of the point of view adopted, and the desired effect intended to be produced often not higher sources than the work of Tacitus. Yet Cæsar relates his campaigns as an eye-witness, while Tacitus frequently is separated by as much as seventy-five years from some of the important events contained in his *Annals*, and was, therefore, obliged to use the works of preceding historians, and even sometimes to appeal to unwritten oral tradition. Yet Tacitus does not cease to be a veracious historian simply because he was not an eye-



witness of the events he records, and Julius Cæsar is not elevated beyond the reach of criticism because he writes history as a contemporary.

A narrative can be true even if it is not the work of an eye-witness. Even granting a comparatively late editorial revision of the first Gospel, there is no reason why the Synoptic Gospels as a whole should be placed as to historical value below the work of Tacitus, who, probably in 110 was writing the history of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, in whose period falls the public ministry of Our Lord. And there is reason to believe that there is embedded in the texts of the Gospels, written as they were many years before the Annals of Tacitus, connected narratives in fragments, coming down from the reign of the Emperor Tiberius in a much less altered shape than the matter which had been worked over by the experienced literary hand of the Roman historian.

It must be remembered that the Gospels have an historical value, even if they are not composed as recognized historical documents, and are devoid of the traditional literary form common to historical writers. As the title indicates, all of the Gospels were written with the view of the needs and organization of the early Christian community. While Tacitus wrote for the study or the lecture-room, St. Luke and St. Mark put down in writing the forms of Christian teaching that were used for the purpose of oral instruction given to the converts who were brought under the influence of Christian missionaries. The preaching of the Apostles, though no one need expect an exact sten-

ographic report of their words, is without doubt substantially presented in the Synoptic Gospels, and, as in this preaching the Apostles were witnesses of the ministry of Jesus, the contents of the Gospels have an historical character.

When one considers the general literary standards of the authors of the Gospels, it is nothing short of grotesque to attribute to them either the ability or the wish to construct out of their own inner consciousness a narrative whose chief figure had no more reality than the creations of Shakespeare's plays. The extraordinary lengths to which this kind of criticism may go may be illustrated in the claim of a recent critic, who, in discussing the Gospel of St. Matthew, says, "If Taine had been born at that particular time and in that particular country, and supposing that he was a Christian, it perhaps would not have been impossible for him to have conceived and composed the history of Jesus in a way not very different from that followed by St. Matthew."

In this statement it seems almost unnecessary to call attention to the host of risky hypotheses behind the analogy. The authors of the Gospels show little or no familiarity with the rules of classical historical writing. They are devoid of the common rhetorical finish and form. They are indifferent to any systematic chronological indications by which the various portions of their narrative might be woven into some sort of a consistent whole. There are no fixed dates in the life of Our Lord, but equally obscure chronologically is the history of the primitive Christian com-

munity at Jerusalem, and also the details of the early journeys of evangelists in Judea. Yet with all this neglect of the machinery and technique of historical writing, the Evangelists evidently tried to get at the truth and reproduce in writing the actual effects which brought about conviction to the minds of those who first heard the message of Jesus.

The very lapses and imperfections in the Gospels considered as historical narratives are so many evidences of their close touch with reality. If they had gone through a systematic doctoring process they would lend themselves to those schemes of harmonization which have been for so long the despair of the traditional expositions of Christ's life and teaching. If the Gospel text had been in the hands of a group of trained literary experts of the first century, it is not easy to see how the common predilection of the first age of the Church for St. Matthew's Gospel could have had any other result than the ultimate disappearance of St. Mark's Gospel and the complete retouching of the text of St. Luke, either by way of alteration or suppression, in order to bring it into harmony with St. Matthew. But this natural development was arrested from the very first. The desire for consistency was less supreme than the reverence which inspired the preservation of the actual words of Jesus, even at the expense of producing varieties of interpretation of those words.

It is possible to say with emphasis that writings so widely diffused as the Gospels have not suffered the fate of interpolation. Probably no text in the world

has been submitted to such careful examination by such a large number of trained experts as the text of the New Testament. The history of variations, great and small, is intimately known, and the reasons for the changes, apart from the mere accidents of the copyists, can be determined with great accuracy. Fortunately the hand of the harmonist was not allowed to interfere with the integrity of the original text. There is no trace of those artifices by which the first three Gospels were to be forced always to tell the same story in the same way. Marcion, the celebrated Gnostic teacher, proposed to combine in one text a harmonized statement of Our Lord's ministry. It was perhaps due to the feeling against him that the Catholic Church of the second century hesitated to conduct its conflict with the Gnostics with such questionable weapons as a text of the Gospels that had been tampered with for doctrinal purposes.

It may be said, even allowing that the tendency to put back the dates of the composition of the Gospels to a period not long after the middle of the first century be accepted as legitimate, is it not true that during a period of thirty to forty years of oral tradition the faith of the early community may have radically altered. But it is to be noted here that even such critics as Julicher, who in his *Introduction to the New Testament* postulates a series of dates for the Gospels which would extend the interval of composition far longer than that given by Harnack, speaks of the Synoptic Gospels as having a supreme value, not only as books of religious edification, but also as sources for

the history of the life of Jesus: "The special merits of the Synoptists is precisely that they did not repaint but preserve the image of the historical Christ."

Whatever may be urged against the historicity of the miracle narratives in contrast with the *logia* of Jesus, it still remains true that Jesus did acts which were judged to be miraculous by those who witnessed them. In other words, the witnesses of His ministry not only heard sayings which have come down to us in the text of the Gospels substantially as they were spoken, but that they also saw deeds done by Him, reported in the Gospels substantially after the manner in which they were originally witnessed. A narrative of miraculous healing, such as that contained in St. Mark's Gospel, where the Aramaic phrase *Talitha Koumi* is not due to the poetic fancy of the Evangelist. The Jewish picture of the Messiah did not contain such details as the night passed in the Garden of Gethsemane, and a Messiah, standing out as the chief figure in such a mighty tragedy of realism, cannot have been the product of an idealizing imagination. The subordinate figures in the life of Jesus have the same convincing reality as the chief one. The denial of Peter is as convincingly real as the Passion of Jesus.

If the figure of Jesus, as found in the Synoptics, though the subordinate details may differ in the individual evangelists, is one harmonious whole, the total harmony comes from the reality of the character and not from any special literary skill on the part of the writers of the Gospel. Nothing is clearer, as Julicher says, than the fact that the writers of the Gospel

went through a process of self-effacement. They subordinated their own personalities and took as their guide when they traced the figure of their Master, the accepted tradition of the Christian communities for whom they wrote, and who found in their description such details as were recognized to be faithful to the original. Such faith might reconstruct a faithful image of Him without drawing upon either reflection or criticism. Some details it forgets; some others it introduces. But after all, in spite of there being some evidence of failure or arbitrariness, the accuracy of the portrait is such that a first-class historian, provided with all the aids of science and equipped with all the technique of his art, could not have done better for the original. Such an advanced critic as Johannes Weiss is even emphatic as to the historical value of the subordinate details in the Gospel narrative, and he mentions as an illustration of this veracity, the careful, yet spontaneous way in which the figure of John the Baptist is drawn by the Evangelists. As to the presentation of Jesus in their narrative, he calls attention to the forceful traits in which the character of Jesus is depicted, mentioning especially how He stands out in contrast to those who surround Him, whether they be friends or foes, and he asks, "If this image were only the expression of a common ideal, that of the first generation of Christians, we have a right to ask how is it that these men who, in the Acts and in the Epistles belong to the common type of humanity, produce such a unique expression of their dreams. If their work is only the result of imagination we feel

bound to say that collective faith has created a personage of far greater proportions than its horizon." No literary theory which divorces personality from reality can account for the figure of Jesus as He appears on the canvas of Gospel history.

Those, too, who attempt to separate the supernatural from the natural factors in the Gospels have before them a hard task. The line of division between the two is, after all, purely a matter of convention, for what appears to one age as supernatural might be interpreted by another age as the expression of what is purely natural. One of the favorite methods adopted in eliminating the supernatural is the contention that statements or passages in the New Testament purporting to be historical were really suggested by the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Readers of the Acts will recall how frequently the Messiasship of Jesus is based upon appeals to the Old Testament. The same method is used frequently in St. Matthew's Gospel, where the reader is constantly told that such and such an event in the ministry of Jesus is the accomplishment of a corresponding prediction in the Old Testament scripture.

This recourse to what is called typology was popular in the early Christian community, and Professor Stanton, among others, holds that a regular catena of such texts in the Aramaic language was prepared and circulated for early Christian use. The theory, therefore, is that the Gospel tradition was influenced by this prevalent typology, that is, in many cases, the Old Testament prediction was not so much a comment on

the passage in the New as the direct source from which it was drawn. The Evangelist came to believe that what he interpreted as a prophecy actually took place. This supposed construction, which indicates the abandonment of the imaginative hypothesis, can, of course, not have a very wide application. It would concern not the whole of the Gospel narrative but a few passages, more particularly those in the infancy sections and in the details of the crucifixion. But even the somewhat fanciful use of these Old Testament prophecies by such a writer as the final editor of St. Matthew's Gospel, does not prove that the main figures or the main elements in his narrative are fictitious. He constantly adopts a certain process of selection in the Old Testament passages which he incorporates in his narrative, and if he had not had real facts to guide him, it is not easy to see how he happened to suppress some details of the early prophecies and preserved others intact. The objection against this procedure is put with characteristic clarity and vigor by Professor Loisy in his destructive notice of Reinach's book that appeared recently in the *Révue Historique*. "If," he says, "the crucifixion of Jesus was not attested by contemporaries but only by texts far after the event, the psalm might have been the origin of the tradition in question. But in the state of the witnesses it is idle to raise such a hypothesis. It would be just as profitable to deny as a whole the authenticity of the evangelic parables because it pleased St. Matthew to see in parabolic teaching the fulfilment of the Seventy-eighth Psalm."



Another favorite way of eliminating the miraculous is to reject all of those passages which do not relate to acts of physical healing, and to justify the elimination by saying that these so-called miracles are nothing more than parables which the evangelists have mistaken for narratives of actual events. That there is some justification for this point of view may be seen in the explanation of the Temptation of Jesus, an event which the disciples could only have known from the lips of the Master Himself. It may well be that in recounting this period of His life He spoke of this period of test under the forms of a parable, and it is recalled, too, how He spoke on one occasion of seeing Satan fall from Heaven as a thunderbolt. It would be interesting to follow this method of exegesis in its various applications, for example, the miraculous draft of fishes is said to be really a parable of apostolic preaching, while the calming of the tempest refers to the persecutions of the Church, and the multiplication of the loaves and fishes was originally nothing more than eucharistic teaching under the form of a parable. It is impossible to deny that symbolism is latent in the Synoptic Gospels, and becomes a directive principle in the Fourth Gospel, but it requires some stretch of the imagination to figure how, without a precedent act or action, symbolism could come into being. It would be like the rope of the Eastern fakir, suspended in the air without attachment from above or below.

To construct the life of Jesus on a purely naturalistic hypothesis, that is, such an attempt as was made by Renan two generations ago, leads to such a forced

interpretation of texts and passages that no historical critic of repute would dare adopt it if he were dealing with documents and sources relating to the same period of history or relating to a personality of any other period of history, the events of whose life were at all analogous to those of the life of Jesus. The historian who fastens his chariot to the star of common sense will make a lamentable failure if he treats the first age of Christianity as if it were the age of Rousseau or Voltaire, and the genesis of Christianity is more of an enigma without the miraculous than it is if this factor be allowed to enter with the significance attached to it by the earliest Christian religious consciousness.

A further method of reducing the uniqueness of the Gospel records to some sort of common level with that of other forms of religious belief, is to apply to it the inductions of comparative religion. Such a method of study has its specific value. Considerable light, for example, can be thrown upon many phases of the teaching of Jesus by comparing it with the forms of rabbinical learning. No one would be foolish enough to undervalue the information made accessible to the New Testament scholar by such work as may be found in Schürer's *History of the Jewish People in New Testament Times*, and it is worth while recalling the fact that an Anglican investigator, Dr. Lightfoot, two centuries ago, was one of the first to draw upon the rich stores of traditional Jewish teaching to illustrate the text of the New Testament. The last word has not yet been said in this department of re-

search, and just as the Jewish environment of the origins of Christianity may be traced, so the methods of thought, the religious phraseology, and the general orientation of the Greek-speaking portion of the Roman Empire, may be made to answer many of the unsolved problems of New Testament criticism. It is only necessary to refer to Deissman's book, "Light from the East," as a general indication of the fruitfulness of this type of study.

Yet the result of the study of comparative religion, however applied in any of its various spheres, has not succeeded in demonstrating that Christianity is a mere syncretism. Indeed, without the personality of Jesus, the Christian religion is more of an enigma than ever before. It is nothing short of childish to reduce the Christian faith to a combination of Hellenic, Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian elements. Any such natural history of Christianity is as futile as the attempt to reduce the vital forces of the protoplasm to its constituent chemical elements. But among the hosts of hypotheses, all tending to cast a doubt on the historicity of Jesus, Pan-Babylonianism has its votaries just as enthusiastic as the votaries of Panhellenism.

The catalogue of naturalistic exegesis is not even yet exhausted. There must be added the anthropological school, the specialists on the myths and rituals of all peoples and of all ages, the school, one of whose representative works may be found in Professor Fraser's "Golden Bough." Following the anthropological line of argument, the crucifixion is denied ever to have taken place, and is presented simply as a myth whose

principal figure is analogous to that of Mithras or Attis. In view of this bold attempt to eliminate altogether the historical character of the life of Jesus, it is hardly necessary to refer to similar lines of argument directed against the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. The interest in the attempt lies in the fact that the school of anthropologists seem to realize, with a consistency denied to other schools of naturalistic criticism, that in order to get rid of the supernatural factor in the Gospels one must succeed in wiping off the canvas of New Testament history its central figure.

Those who wish to follow in detail and in a popular form the strange gymnastics of this most modern and most ultra form of criticism need only refer to the unconsciously humorous pages of Reinach's "Orpheus." And it is not unfair to call the reader's attention to the fact that if this unquestioned and most erudite authority on comparative religion had applied to Judaism, to Buddhism, to Islam, to Hinduism, the kind of reasoning that he employs in his survey of Christian origins, Mother Goose might become a serious textbook as compared with his own volume. As a matter of fact, the charming tales of the anthropological school are so far removed from the ordinary type of religious conviction, either in its strongest or weakest content, that its influence can hardly become extensive.

More important and more cautions are the contributions offered by the historians of dogma, who, applying the formula of evolution, declare that all of the distinguishing marks of the Christian faith and the Christian organization come from a later period than

the life of Jesus. This school pictures His ministry as the short life-work of one who was a humble Jewish rabbi of most limited horizon and devoid of any original ideas. It is said that the Messiasship of Jesus and His identity with God are due to the teaching of the Fourth Gospel, but that Jesus Himself taught no dogma and instituted nothing resembling the sacraments of the Catholic Church. It is also affirmed that the idea of redemption comes from Pauline influence and has no other source. To test such statements as these one must make a collection of the *logia* found in the first three Gospels. Here, though there is none of the systematic development found in the Pauline writing or the Johannine writings, there is enough to show that Jesus Himself made statements that prove His consciousness of a transcendent personality.

The germ of Johannine speculative theology may be found in the Second Gospel, and as to the sacramental teaching of the Church strong enough support can be found for its primitive origin in the celebrated passage on the Eucharist in the first epistle to the Corinthians. To derive this passage or the passage incorporating the original Christian mission, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," from the evolution of the consciousness of the primitive Christian community apart from the creative personality of its Founder, would be as incomprehensible, not to say as paralyzing, to the intellectual presuppo-

sitions of mankind, as it would be to derive the character of Hamlet from the collective consciousness of a group of London straying players in the Elizabethan Age. In other words, Christianity without the historical Christ is an enigma. To account for it without His personality would mean such a negation of the laboriously constructed intellectual hypotheses of many generations of civilized life, it would be necessary for mankind to start afresh and create a science of history entirely unlike any conceived of before. The commonly accepted theories of human action would have to be neglected, and with such a mass of indefiniteness and uncertainty, not a single historical source could be quoted as authoritative. It is well therefore, to appreciate the implications of radical criticism, for they cannot be isolated. They involve more than the investigation of special texts or individual documents; extended beyond the plane of their usual application, they imply a destructive process that would reduce to nothingness many of the acquisitions of man's intellectual and cultural life. Just as the tendency of Nihilism would disintegrate the social order, that wonderful product of the hopes and the sufferings of man through unnumbered ages, so this light-hearted effort to cut away the structure of man's religious convictions would do away with the significance of education, and would bring to a standstill all expectations of progress in the various departments of human energy.

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Ramsay, W.—“Was Christ Born in Bethlehem?”  
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Harnack, A.—“The Sayings of Our Lord.”  
Pfleiderer, W.—“Primitive Christianity.”  
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“Jesus or Christ?”—*Hibbert Journal* Supplement, 1909.  
Scott, E. F.—“The Apologetic of the New Testament.”

## APPENDIX.

Baron F. von Hügel submits the following list of twenty-five books in Religious Philosophy, Christian Origins and Church Development, recommended for Apologetic work:

### I. RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY.

1. Edward Caird.—“The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers.” James MacLehose. Glasgow. 1904. 2 vols.
2. James Adam.—“The Vitality of Platonism,” and other essays. Cambridge University Press. 1911. 1 vol.
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6. Clement C. J. Webb.—“Problems in the Relations of God and Man.” James Nisbet. 1911. 1 vol.
7. Emile Boutroux.—“De la Contingence des Lois de la Nature.” Felix Alcan, ed. 1908. 1 vol.
8. Emile Boutroux.—“Science et Religion, dans la Philosophie Contemporaine.” E. Flammarion. 1908. 1 vol.
9. Broder Christiansen.—“Kritik der Kantischen Erkenntnisslehre.” Clauss & Feddersen. Hanau. 1911. 1 vol.
10. \*H. A. Prichard.—“Kant’s Theory of Knowledge.” Oxford; Clarendon Press. 1909. 1 vol.
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14. Harry Jones.—“Browning as a Philosopher and Religious Teacher.” James MacLehose. Glasgow. 1902. 1 vol.



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15. Hermann Gunkel.—“Die Urgeschichte und die Patriarchen. Göttingen. Daudenhoed u. Ruprecht. 1911. 1 vol.
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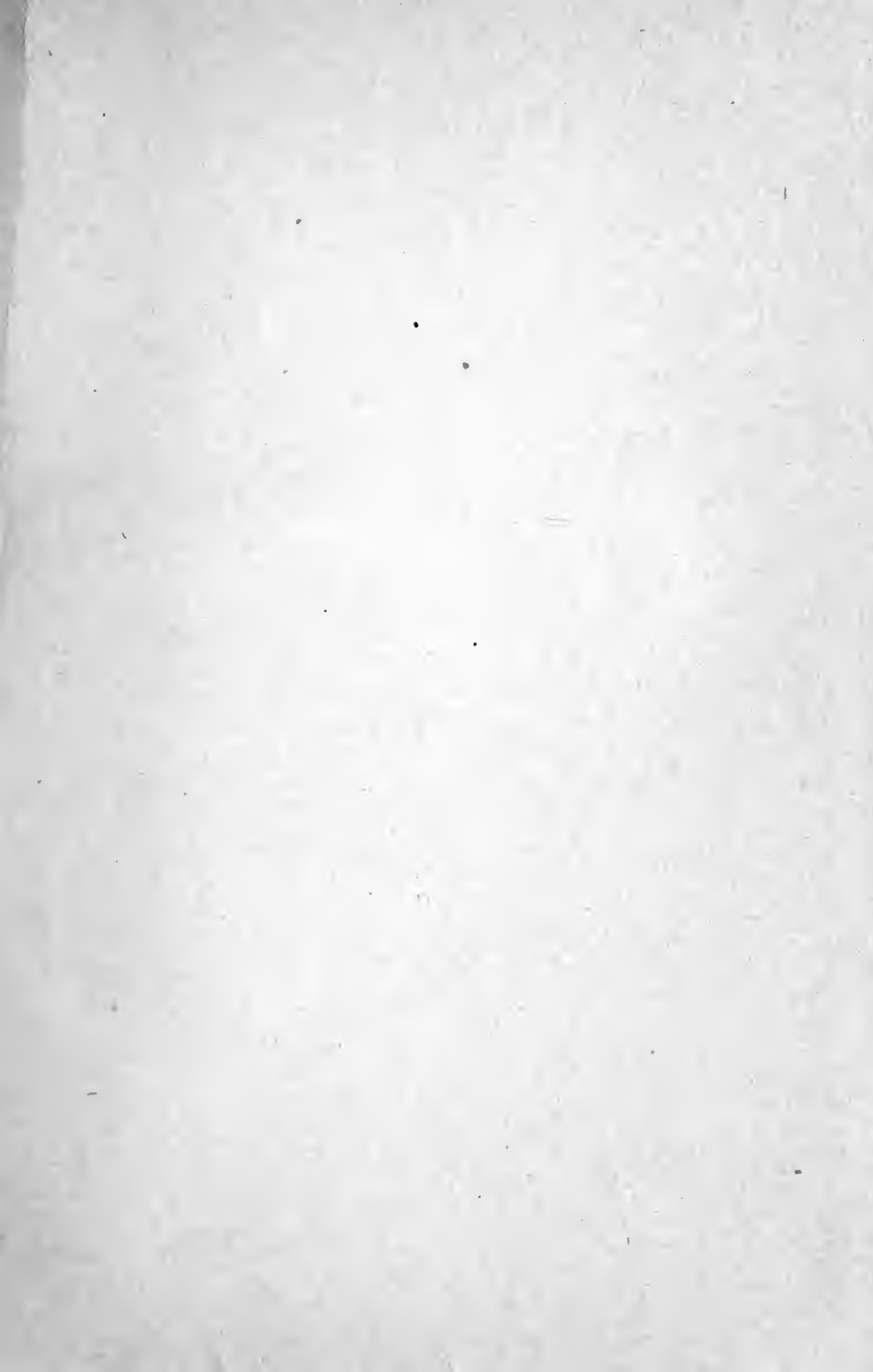
20. \*Rudolph Sohm.—“Wesen und Ursprung des Katholizismus.” XXVII Band No. X Leipzig. Teubner. 1909. *Cr.*
21. Mother Juliana.—“Revelation of Divine Love.” Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner. 1902. 1 vol.
22. \*Ernst Troeltsch.—“Protestantisches Christentum und Kirche in der Neuzeit.” “Geschichte der Christlichen Religion.” (“Kultur der Gegenwart.”) Teubner. 1909. *Cr.*
23. G. F. Lipps.—“Weltanschauung und Bildungsideal.” Teubner. 1911.
24. \*Ernst Troeltsch.—“Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu.” Tübingen. Mohr. 1911.
25. Edmond J. A. Holmes.—“What Is and What Might Be.” Constable. 1911. 1 vol. *Cr.*

N. B.—The books considered to require considerable criticism and debate are marked *Cr.*; the books found to be especially original and stimulating are marked with an asterisk.









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